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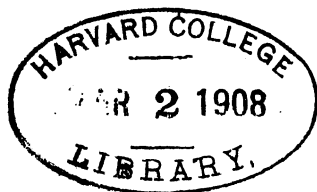
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TO  
**The Ladies of Victoria,**  
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THEIR KINDLY SYMPATHY WITH  
"THE VAGABOND'S" LABOURS.





## P R E F A C E.

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I RETURN my best thanks to all my thousand kind friends who paid half-a-crown for my first book. Encouraged by the success of that production, Mr. George Robertson ventures on a second. For my own sake, I trust it will prove as saleable as the first. My many anonymous correspondents can now show their friendship for me by coming forward with their dollars, and exhausting the editions already published. This will cause the production of a third series, which will contain a portrait of the undersigned.

I believe it is an original idea, this turning the Preface of one work into an advertising medium for another. However, it only shows my practical turn of mind when not "on the vag." If in the present series there is aught to offend, I cannot help it. I myself care nothing for the politics or conduct of individuals or committees ; but I must write the truth as I see it, and my only endeavour is to be impartial. I have satisfied

the conductors and proprietors of the *Argus*, who sanction the republication of these articles. Generally, too, I think I have satisfied the public, or they would not so heartily laugh at, and applaud, Mr. Harwood in the Pantomime, when he represents me in such a flattering light. I am very pleased to say that I have satisfied myself. At the present moment I have in hand several very startling and serious subjects. So, wishing all my readers, friends, and enemies "a happy new year," I subscribe myself

Their faithful servant,

"THE VAGABOND."

*The Argus,*  
MELBOURNE, 1st January, 1877.

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# THE VAGABOND PAPERS.

(SECOND SERIES.)

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## THREE WEEKS IN THE ALFRED HOSPITAL.

IN the summer of 1868 I was recuperating my exhausted health at Llandudno, in North Wales. This is naturally one of the most charming watering-places in Great Britain, but like all of them, with the exception of Brighton and Scarborough, it is rather slow. It is true that within easy distance are the wonderful Penrhyn slate quarries, the romantic scenery of Bettws-y-Coed, Capel Currig, and Beddgelert, the glories of Llanberris Lakes and Pass, and the mighty Snowdon. The sail down the Menai Straits is a pleasant one, passing as you do under the tubular and suspension bridges, triumphs of engineering perpetuating the genius of Telford and Stephenson. All these I had done, and was beginning to get rather tired of the monotony of Llandudno life, the round of sea bathing, walks on the Orme's Head, and modest evening pool. I was thinking of returning to London, or taking an early steamer back to the States, when the news arrived that on the next week, *en route* from Ireland, the heir to the throne would pay a flying visit to the principality from which he takes his title, and sojourn for a few hours at Carnarvon, the historic birthplace of the first

Prince of Wales. Great preparations were made for this important event; and curious to see a mass meeting of the Celtic race, I, the day previously, went to Carnarvon. This ancient town was in a ferment of excitement, boiling over with loyalty. A monster marquee was erected in the courtyard of the ruined castle, the place where tradition says the first prince was, and irreverent modern historians say was not, born. Hideous transparencies were hung in the square. Triumphal arches bridged the principal streets. These were ornamented with mottoes in Welsh, unpronounceable by Sassenach tongues, wishing welcome and all good things to the Prince and Princess. There was high wassail at the houses of the county gentlemen, and I was most hospitably received and treated. On the morning of the eventful day the country people early drove into town, and the railroads brought thousands of excursionists from all parts. It was a great day for Wales and Carnarvon. Before noon the Royal party arrived, and I, with a number of privileged gentlemen, clad in the orthodox frock coat and lavender gloves, welcomed them on the platform. Then we adjourned to the castle, and after Mr. Llewellyn Turner, a local solicitor, gentleman, and mayor *pro tem*.—now a knight—had read an address in Welsh, a thousand voices sang "God bless the Prince of Wales," with the wondrous harmony for which the Welsh race are noted as being superior to the other inhabitants of the British Isles. The *dejeuner*, luncheon, or banquet was a magnificent affair, and the Royal couple, I hope, enjoyed themselves. I know I did. I had been introduced to, and soon got on friendly terms with, one of the fair daughters of the land. She kindly took charge of me, and after the set speeches, led me up many steep steps to the prison-like and dismal hole in the Eagle Tower where Edward 11. was not born. Return-

ing, we dallied in one of the open galleries looking into the courtyard, on pretence of watching the varied throng below us, and I sought more information as to the liquid tongue of Cymry. I had got so far as to remember that *caryad* (I write it phonetically) meant "sweetheart," and was being instructed in other endearing terms, when we were hailed from below to "stand still." To my horror I found that the Royal party was grouped for the purpose of being photographed, and that we, unconsciously, effectively broke the dreary background of ruined wall. After this, it was time to return to mamma. I found that the Royal train was leaving before its time. There was a vague rumour of something amiss. The lovely Princess (whom I adore with the respectful devotion of a Knight of the Round Table) and her jolly partner were evidently quite well. Was the Queen dead? Something had happened, or the visit would not be so abruptly cut short. Proceeding to the railway station, I learned from a director of the L. and N. W. R. that the wires had flashed the news that Prince Alfred, as he was then commonly called, had been shot and grievously wounded in Australia, and that his brother was anxious to be in town to obtain authentic information. I well remember the anxious face with which the Prince of Wales came to the group of railway officials, and asked to be taken through quick. "Does your Royal Highness mind a shaking?" asked Mr. Rigg, the burly locomotive superintendent—a man who had risen from the grade of engine-driver. "Not at all." "Well, I'll take you through at 70 miles an hour and drive myself." Rigg did so, and I believe the time was one of the fastest on record.

The act of an individual not only affects future generations entirely remote and unconnected, but often other living individuals who might be supposed to be quite removed from such



a possibility. I fully recognized this great truth, but should have laughed to scorn any one who had prophesied that the act of the mad fanatic O'Farrell could ever, directly or indirectly, influence any of my movements. What had I to do with princes, Fenians, or Australia? Yet the shooting of the Duke of Edinburgh, through the erection of the Alfred Hospital in its present form, and the appointment of some of the officers, as a sequence of that crime, was indirectly the cause of my spending three weeks of hard labour in that institution, filling the highly lucrative and important position of hall-porter and clerk there—salary twenty-five shillings a week with board and lodging. As this valuable post was about to be vacant, some gentlemen who kindly interest themselves in my welfare managed to get me recommended to the secretary as a suitable person, and so, armed with proper testimonials, I, on the 26th September, made my way to the hospital, and presented myself to Mr. Henry Tate, the secretary, for approval and appointment. I found Mr. Tate a nice pleasant little gentleman, with an evident taste for jewellery. He spoke to me kindly, and said that, from what he had heard, I was trustworthy and honest. He would not inquire too much into my past life, or ask what I had been doing previously. (It would have taken me a few days to sum up my career truthfully.) My testimonials were satisfactory and my handwriting fair, so he would engage me. He intimated that he had a suspicion I had been a bit of a vagabond, but that now, if I would set to work and be steady, he would make a man of me. I was very humble, and thanked him warmly. I was to be engaged a month on trial, and on the expiration of that time, if suitable, remain *en permanence*. "But mind —," said Mr. Tate, "if you don't like the place by then, I trust, as a man, you will give me a few days' notice,

to enable me to get a successor, and not leave me in the lurch. I shall do the same by you." I gave this promise, which turned out unfortunately for me afterwards. Then I was told as to my duties, which appeared to be multifarious. As hall-porter, I must always be in the office by the door from 8 o'clock every morning until 6, 8, and 10 at night, according to the days of the week. I must admit all patients, see that they had proper forms of recommendation, or furnish them with "casualty tickets." I must inform the doctors of patients' attendance, make out cards, and direct them to their different wards; also, answer all queries, admit visitors, and be careful to see that these had nothing contraband about them, oranges only being allowed to be brought into the hospital. Every morning I must make alterations in the ward-sheets, make up the ward-books and matron's book, calculating the number of patients on the four different diets, and the extra allowances. Then the cook's ticket had to be made out, and the meat and milk ordered, the latter requiring an abstruse amount of calculation. In the office, the "rough admission" book and "case book" had to be kept, deaths duly recorded, and fifty other little items of clerical work performed. Here was a good line for a poor vagabond! An amount of work for which I was naturally unfitted. However, I felt that I must not disgrace my recommendations, and determined to do my duty in this hall-porter's stage of life to which I was thus strangely called. I had to attend for a couple of days before my predecessor left to be "coached" by him in my duties. The diet calculations were certainly rather puzzling at first—the milk especially so. Some patients had five pints of milk a day, others only half a pint. Those who had porridge were allowed half a pint of milk each, and the extra milk ordered by the doctors had

also to be considered. Then one had to work out how much was required in the morning and evening, and order accordingly. I believe that I have always freely admitted that I hate work and exertion of all kinds, but I also hate to be beaten ; so I concentrated my faculties to master the diet mysteries, and in three or four days I think I was well up in my duties. The clerical work I easily performed—indeed I was quite astonished at the unwonted powers I was developing.

The Alfred Hospital is intended to be built on the pavilion system, but at present consists of only the centre building and one wing, connected by a covered way, which also acts as a gallery for communication between the first floors. In the grounds is a cottage for contagious cases. In a separate building at the back are the kitchen, laundry, store, and sleeping rooms of the male servants. In the main building, on the ground floor, are, on one side, the patients' waiting-rooms, consulting-rooms, and dispensary. On the other side are the secretary's office, sitting-room, and sleeping apartments of the resident medical officers, and board-room, which is also used as a dining-room by the staff. Upstairs are the apartments of the matron, dispenser, nurses, and female servants, and the two female wards, surgical and medical. In the pavilion are the two male wards. The hall and passages are spacious and airy, and are ornamented by two fine stained-glass windows, the gift of the late Mr. George Rolfe, one of the fathers of the institution. From the spacious verandah in front the view over Fawkner Park is rather circumscribed ; but from the first floors one has a magnificent view over South Yarra, Prahran, Emerald-hill, St. Kilda, and Hobson's Bay. Melbourne is nearly entirely hidden from view. The hospital grounds are pleasant with shrubs and flowers, but the want of shade trees must be sadly

felt in the hot weather, and there is not even an arbour or shed for shelter from sun or rain, as at Kew. The officers are all comfortably quartered, but I found the accommodation allotted to the hall-porter rather meagre. My room was on the ground floor, next to the larder: the furniture—an iron bedstead, an old wash-stand, and chair. The gas, which is never turned off, was a desideratum. The bed was of straw—hard, but healthy. I had to be my own housemaid, and consequently the room was not kept so neat as if tended by female hands. At half-past five in the morning I would be aroused by the bell, rung by the watchman, to awake the female servants. Dozing for an hour, I would arise and sally out, jug in hand; to obtain a supply of fresh water. The bath-room used by the officers was, of course, tabooed to me, and the patients' baths I scarcely fancied using. My morning toilet made, I would, perhaps, walk round the ward, and then relieve the watchman at the door. The arrival of the daily papers furnished ample amusement, broken by breakfast-time, until after the doctors had made their rounds, at ten o'clock. Then the nurses would bring down their ward-books; and after making the alterations therein, and taking note of the previous day's admissions and discharges, the hardest work of the day began in making up the diets. However, after a short time I could get all this through in an hour. Another hour would fix up all the office work for the day; and so I had afterwards, apparently, nothing to do but lounge about the doorway, practise the purse trick, and talk with the grooms and coachmen of the various medical officers. There was never any very great rush of patients, half-a-dozen admissions during the day being a large number. The attendance of out-patients, also, was not very large. All these had first to be passed by me—the Cerberus and St. Peter of the institution. I had been

instructed how I should talk to the patients, and was told I must be very firm. This was about my mode of procedure:—A poor woman would, perhaps, come timidly to the door. “Well, madam, what can I do for you?” I asked. “I want to see the doctor.” “Have you an order from a subscriber?” “No.” “Well, this won’t do, you know; you ought to bring an order from a subscriber, or a letter from some respectable person, saying you are unable to pay for medical advice.” “I didn’t know, sir.” “All right; don’t do it again. I’ll give you a casualty ticket.” In thus waylaying patients I only obeyed my orders. The theory of the management of the Alfred, like the Melbourne Hospital, is that none shall be admitted or receive medical relief unless they bring a form of recommendation from a subscriber or well-known citizen, and go through a lot of red-tape formulæ. I totally disagree with this system, and believe that, for out-patients at least, hospitals should be open to all. However, accidents and urgent cases of sickness are supposed to be treated at once, and the sufferers were furnished by me with a casualty ticket, which runs—“This ticket is of use for the day only; if further advice or treatment is necessary, the bearer must make application, with the usual form, to the Committee of the Hospital.”

In practice, however, none were ever refused admission to the Alfred Hospital, either as out or in-patients. Many came to the door unknown and without recommendations, and were passed in by me on a “casualty ticket,” and the resident medical officers, after examination, admitted them as in-patients. It appears to be the policy of the management of the Alfred Hospital to increase, by every means, the real and apparent work. I say “apparent,” because the weekly and yearly reports show more patients relieved than is really the case.

The last annual report states that, during 1875, the following various classes of patients were treated :—In-patients, 1,110; out-patients, 2,456; casualties, 3,033; being an increase of 1,087 over the previous year, viz. :—In-patients, 87; out-patients, 252; casualties, 748. The increase in and the number of the latter class appears extraordinary. In the current weekly reports to the committee, published in the press, casualties also figure largely, between 60 and 70, as a rule. Now, as I made up these numbers, I can state that not 10 per cent. were really accidents or urgent cases which should come under the head of "casualties." The rest were out and in-patients, who came with proper recommendations; but who, on admission, were each, by order of the resident medical officers, supplied with a casualty ticket, thus figuring twice in the returns. In several cases a person would be admitted as a casualty, out, and in-patient all in one week, figuring in each return; and yet there were not three cases, but one case. On leaving the hospital, too, I should have to supply the patient with a casualty ticket to obtain medicine, and so the harmless fraud went on. I do not know if this was intentional, but at all events it perpetuated the fiction which the management of the Alfred Hospital is so anxious to maintain, that the institution is urgently needed for the wants of the immediate neighbourhood, and that it is of great local use. Of this I shall treat further on. Although, as I have said, there was ostensibly nothing to do but lounge away the weary hours in the porch, still something might turn up every minute. I might have to write out special orders for meat or grocery, telegrams to patients' friends, or letters to the undertaker or cemetery. Something might be wrong with a patient's diet, and up and down stairs, to the wards and to the kitchen, I would have to race endeavouring to square things.

A death might occur, and then I should have to assist in carrying down the body to the dead-house. Mr. Tate, however, said I brought good luck to the institution, as, although there was a death the days of my arrival and departure, only one fatal case happened while I was in the hospital. A hall-porter's work was never finished until he was relieved at night, and even then he stood a chance of being called up to remove a corpse. Although the secretary was my only nominal superior, still I was at the beck and call of the resident medical officers. At one period of my life I commanded a large body of men, but I also had to obey. Discipline and the first attribute of command—obedience to orders—I had early learned, and it stood me in good stead at the Alfred Hospital. I laughed in my sleeve many a time as I humbly went about my work. I don't think the medical officers had anything to complain of in my fulfilment of duties. I certainly gave them no chance of finding fault.

Dr. Hearn, the resident physician, was, as the son of his father should be, a gentleman, of quiet reserved manners, who said little to anyone. I shall always think of him with gratitude for one good act. It was a Sunday. I had been—according to the dictum of an esteemed American friend of mine—committing the one unpardonable sin of eating cold pork for supper. I was hungry, and I ate. But I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin I knew would find me out in the small hours of the night, to which I looked forward with horror, unless I could obtain an antidote. But on Sunday nights I could not leave the building, and the servants' mess was run on Good Templar principles. Grog there was none. But help was at hand. I had to take something into the doctor's sitting-room, and Dr. Hearn, after kindly acknowledging my

services, as was his wont to all, said, "— will you have a glass of whisky?" Never was invitation more welcome, but I dissembled my joy, and humbly expressed my thanks; saying I had tasted such liquor before. Accordingly, Dr. Hearn produced his decanter, and told me to help myself, saying that he had found me very attentive, and he would stand my friend. It was a good act and a kind one, Dr. Hearn. You can never tell in this world—one may entertain vagabonds, as well as angels, unawares. Dr. Glendinning, the resident surgeon, was a very new chum, a graduate of the well-known and honoured medical school of Edinburgh. He, like many other successful medical men in Victoria, worked his passage out as ship's surgeon, and luckily dropped into the post—which was then going begging—at the Alfred Hospital. He was a very nice and good-looking young man, who I think would have done well in the Church. He would show very well in the pulpit, clad in a snowy surplice, giving out "dearly beloved;" and I have no doubt he would be loved by many of his fair congregation. But he is very young, and does not yet by any means understand the manners and customs of a new and democratic country. He put on a great deal "too much side," and was very unpopular with the male servants from his *haut en bas* style. Still, I believe him to be decidedly clever, and he was very attentive to his duties, performing many offices which ordinary house surgeons would leave to the nurses, and he will do in time if he will drop some of his peculiarities. Dr. Glendinning never treated me other than well, according to his style to an inferior. I would not give him the chance; but if he had spoken to me as he did to another male servant, it is not thus I should have had the *révanche*. "Liar" is not a pretty word in a gentleman's mouth, when applied to a subordinate,



no matter what the provocation ; and they don't understand that sort of thing in Victoria. The dispenser, Mr. Frost, was a young colonial, with all the native self-reliance of such. He was very good to me, allowing me to sometimes smoke my pipe of an evening in the dispensary, the only decent place in the establishment in which I was allowed to put my nose. This young gentleman was a source of great enjoyment to me from his fondness for American humourists, and the pains he took to introduce me to them; and generally improve my mind. "Have you read *The Innocents Abroad*, by Mark Twain, you know?" said he. "Is he an Australian?" I jesuitically asked, although with a warm remembrance of a certain evening spent at the Lotos Club, New York, in company with Mr. Samuel Clemens, when Mr. Whitelaw Reid, editor of the *New York Tribune*, was chairman, and Mr. Locke (Petroleum V. Nasby) the vice. "What, not read Mark Twain? Why, man, you haven't lived yet," and Mr. Frost kindly lent me *Roughing It*, to introduce me to that author. Shakespeare, Dickens, George Eliot, and Mark Twain I can always read a second time, so was thankful for the loan of this work ; it passed away an idle and monotonous hour. The *entrée* to the dispensary was a great boon to me, and on several occasions there were highly interesting conversations, which, if fully reported, would prove instructive.

Mr. Tate, my master, was a real nice little gentleman, of a confiding disposition. He was a graduate of Christ's Hospital and the Railway Clearing House, London, which institutions turn out educated men and good accountants. He early took a fancy to me, and let me have the complete run of his office, trusting a great deal to a new hand. He is a phrenologist and physiognomist, and soon, as he thought, gauged my character.

The first week I was there I suggested that he should lock a certain drawer containing valuables. "No," said he, "if there is any loss I have to make it good, and I would sooner do so than be suspicious of you. I am a judge of character, you see. I don't know how it is, but I can tell intuitively if a man is to be trusted, and I feel I can fully trust you ;" and Mr. Tate meditated on this wonderful insight he possessed, whilst I thought of Judas Iscariot and other traitors. Little did this innocent gentleman dream of the "Vagabond" he was nursing, so to speak, in his bosom. He was so much pleased with the manner in which I performed my duties, that I began to think hall-porters, like poets, were born, not made, and that I had at last found my true sphere in this life. Mr. Sizar Elliot, the collector, one of the pioneers of the colony, a man who has tried everything, and at last settled down to his present occupation, gave me a good many instructions. "You must let no one in without a subscriber's order or recommendation from a respectable person. Then," continued he, "I am down on the party for a subscription. What we want is money ; the institution cannot be carried on without, and you must look sharply after the patients." As before shown, in this respect Mr. Elliot's orders were continually set at naught.

If I got along well with my superiors, I was pleased to think that my fellow-servants and the nurses were generally kindly-disposed towards me. The men messed together in the kitchen, a dreary shed, cold in winter and hot in summer. Here, at eight o'clock in the morning, we breakfasted on fried chops and coffee. For dinner there was beef or mutton, with bad potatoes. At tea-time, meat again. The abundance of inferior meat was quite characteristic of the colony—I got quite to loathe the sight of flesh. The chief of the table was

the engineer, a good, honest, straightforward, Scotchman, whom I learnt to respect, with the steady watchful gaze of those who pass their time ministering to steam. He introduced himself to me humorously by asking if I knew Stonewall Jackson. I thought of the time when I had last seen that hero, whom England has honoured by the magnificent statue presented by private subscribers throughout Great Britain, and now erected in the Capitol grounds at Richmond; and I said, "Yes, I had heard of him." "Well, my name is Jackson, and, like him, I don't care a — for any man." I scarcely remembered this as the peculiar attribute of the great Virginian general, but said I hoped I should never offend Mr. Jackson. Next there was the gardener, an Anglo-Saxon from Kent, with bronzed face and arms, the healthy livery of his occupation. The dispensary porter was pale and sickly-looking, as became one who passed his time amongst drugs. The messenger boy was a good lad, with the sporting proclivities of a young Australian. The mess was made up by the out-door-patient porter, who looked after these when they had run the gauntlet of the hall porter's inspection. He was an Orangeman, and open to chaff as such. An honest man, but bigoted, as is the fashion of Ulster boys. We got along very well, however. The table furniture of our mess was modest—plates we certainly had—knives and forks too, of a kind. Cups and teaspoons there were none, but in their stead mugs and large iron spoons, used for every purpose. Quite colonial, in fact. However, as I went in strongly for reforms of all kinds whilst in the hospital, I got Mr. Tate to order some cups, saucers, and teaspoons, which arrived, however, after I left. The living and service was altogether worse than my experiences of such at Kew, but in other respects quite different. We had our meals

in an orderly way and like Christians, our conversation restrained and chastened by the presence of the female sex, for although it was a nuisance messing in the kitchen, we had the benefit of the presence and conversation of the cooks, housemaids, and nurses, who would be in and out, getting the patients' dinner. Now, I reckon all these girls were about as good as they make them of the class, many pretty and good-tempered, and given to the cause of temperance—as it is in Good Templar lodges. We had our little jokes, but there was no harm done. I certainly liked them better than the “young ladies” at Kew. The absurdity of “Miss-ing” every one there annoyed me; but at the Alfred Hospital one could call the girls “Sally,” “Mary,” or “Jenny,” without their being offended. One of them was a passionate lover of music, and I was surprised when she took me up whilst humming a rather unknown opera tune. Another pretty girl, one of the nurses—who has determined to marry none but “a squatter's son”—was down on me the first day I appeared at the mess. She, it seems, has a sister at Kew, and had seen me at the ball there. She was not certain of this; but as every new patient for a long time back had endured scrutiny, and been suspected as “The Vagabond,” she began questioning me. I was complimented to see that she remembered more of my writings than I did myself; but I was very innocent, and lied beautifully; and so, until I left, the suspicion died away. This girl had a great down on “The Vagabond,” and amused me by the vicious manner in which she snapped her teeth, and said, “I should like to catch him in my ward. I'd serve him out. He'd get a dose he'd remember.” However, I don't think this young party would be so hard on me now. Altogether, we were rather a jolly lot in the kitchen, but it is a wretched place for the

servants to mess or congregate in. I really think the committee should build a dining-room, where the nurses and servants could also sit when off duty. Some of the men are married and have their own homes, although they have to be on duty and stop on the premises' on certain nights during the week ; but for those who live at the hospital, it is in wet weather a miserable time. I myself was lucky, being allowed in the dispensary, from my semi-clerical position, having privileges ; but I wish to put in a good word on behalf of my late fellow servants.

The night watchman was a quaint old Scotchman, who had dreary work during the long hours of the night. In the event of any accident case arriving, or a death in the ward, he would call up another man to assist him ; but these happened very rarely, and my rest was not disturbed during my stay. Months might pass without a casualty arriving in the nights. The watchman was deeply impressed with the responsibilities of his position, and was very exact in keeping the time-book, the record of the absences of the servants and staff. Nothing appeared to delight him more than marking the late return of the resident physician or surgeon. This time-book was a great nuisance to me, and I never presumed to spy out or mark the comings and goings of the above gentlemen. It is a practice which I think should be discontinued, as highly degrading to a professional man. I have now criticised all the staff with one exception. I find that, contrary to my usual custom of giving *place aux dames*, I have not yet mentioned the matron, Miss Turriff.

When Mr. Frederick Hudson, Mr. Connery, Mr. John Russell Young, or other gentlemen entrusted for the time being by James Gordon Bennett the Second with the manage-

ment of the *New York Herald*, had occasion to send out "special correspondents" or "commissioners," they spoke thuswise:—"Mr. Henry M. Stanley, you will witness the fall of Magdala, afterwards find Livingstone, return and be lionized for a short time, then discover the sources of the Nile, and make war on our account, killing and taking kings and chiefs captives *pour s'amuser*." "Mr. O'Kelly, you will go to Cuba, and spend some time in the jungle with the insurgents. It is true you may be shot as a spy by the Spaniards, but then we'll get up a war with Spain and annex the island. You will be the means of doing a great work." "Mr. MacGahan, you will go to Khiva. We don't know where it is, or how you'll get there, but you must go. Should you survive you will take a trip to the North Pole and extend our circulation thither." "Mr. Henderson, you will have to spend some time amongst the swamp angels of Arkansas and Louisiana. You may never return. God bless you." "Gentlemen, one word to each and all. The management of this journal desires you to give us facts, if you can, but, above all make your letters interesting and amusing. Good-bye." Now, *The Argus* is conducted on entirely different principles. As regards "The Vagabond" articles, my only instructions are to write the truth as I see it, and never sacrifice the same, however dull it be. I receive no "riding orders." Many people may say I am allowed too great latitude of expression; but I am proud to think that my good faith is relied upon, if my discretion is sometimes lacking. However, before I assumed my situation at the Alfred Hospital, I was ordered to examine two points, about which there has been some debate. These were—have the disputes between members of the regular staff had a prejudicial effect upon the management of the institution, and does the Alfred

Hospital well fulfil its ostensible mission. For some months past reports had appeared in the daily press of charges brought by, or against, the matron—Miss Turriff—and of squabbles with and summary dismissal of female servants, indicating a state of things anything but calculated to promote the efficient working of a charitable institution. Private investigations had been held by the committee, but the evidence was not published; and a general wish on the part of the management to hush up matters appeared evident. Now, in my position as clerk and hall-porter, I had access to information which enables me to form a fair opinion of the late and present troubles. It would take too long, and prove uninteresting if written out *in extenso*. Besides, I trust the whole system of management, and the conduct of the committee, resident, and medical and surgical staff, will shortly be the subject of a public and disinterested inquiry. In the following brief sketch and conclusions formed, I am very sorry that I have to speak unfavourably of the matron. To write one word against a woman is repugnant to my private feelings; but I must put these on one side in performing a public duty.

Miss Turriff came out to Sydney with a batch of trained nurses consigned to Miss Osborn, lady superintendent of the Infirmary. When the Duke of Edinburgh was struck down by the hand of an assassin, Miss Turriff and Nurse Miller (who came out with her, and is now in the Alfred Hospital) were appointed to nurse the Royal sufferer. I presume they did their work well, and, with the aid of Providence and the doctors, pulled their interesting charge through his crisis. The Duke was not ungrateful. It is said he gave them each £5, a gold watch, and his blessing. He did more—he promised to

look after their future welfare. Unlike many royal promises, this was not broken. When the foundation-stone of the Alfred Hospital was laid, the Duke, it is said, mentioned the name of Miss Turriff to the committee, and she was appointed matron. Nurse Miller was by the same influence elected matron of the Brisbane Infirmary; but she was not strong enough for the place, and is now a subordinate of her old comrade. Mr. James Service is an excessively loyal man. In his eyes, no doubt, a halo of glory is around the lady who nursed a prince, and had the honour of adjusting royal bandages. Anyhow, it is the open statement of everyone I have met that Miss Turriff is the *protégée* (the term is not meant offensively) of Mr. Service, and as such can do no wrong. A man of strong, indomitable will, Mr. Service, as chairman of the Alfred Hospital, is, in fact, the management. The rest of the members generally bow to his decisions, and considering the interest he takes in the institution, and his intellectual superiority, it is not strange that they should do so. I believe Miss Turriff to be a lady of remarkably good intentions, but she has unfortunately a naturally obnoxious way of displaying these. Almost from the very first she has been at "loggerheads" with the different members of the staff, and under her *régime* there have been about 120 new female servants and nurses within the last five years. The system of management established by the committee, I think, was from the very first a wrong one. The secretary and superintendent was supposed to have the power of appointment of all the male servants, and the matron of the female servants and nurses. The one was the master and the other the mistress of the house. This division of power and want of a head is, I believe, a vicious system of administration. The want of harmony between the matron and other officers of the institution came to



a crisis early this year. The medical officers appear to have always objected to Miss Turriff's interference with the ward duties of the nurses, and also with the patients, both male and female. For months at a time things have been in such a state that all communications between the secretary, resident surgeon, and the matron have been carried on in writing. At last Dr. Cooke, the then medical officer, wrote to Mr. Tate, the secretary, requesting him to lay the conduct of Miss Turriff, in interfering with his duties, and with the patients, before a committee. Mr. Tate patched up a hollow truce between them. The letter-writing, however, still went on ; and from the specimens which fell under my notice, in this the lady had considerably the best of her correspondents. She would make a capital editor of a New York religious newspaper. In January a man died in the hospital, and Miss Turriff wrote a letter to Dr. Cooke, couched in the strongest language, accusing him of having, through negligence, caused the man's death, and bringing against him charges, which, if true, would and should ruin him as a professional man for life. She appears also to have written in the same strain to Mr. Service ; and let me say that, all throughout, the semi-private correspondence between the secretary and matron and the chairman I hold to be entirely wrong. Mr. Service, no doubt, has acted as he thought for the best in keeping things quiet, and as far as possible preventing these disputes coming before the committee, and thence getting into the papers. It would, however, have been far better to have gone thoroughly and publicly into the matter six months ago. A copy of Mr. Service's reply to Miss Turriff is on file at the hospital, in which he privately censures her for her letter to Dr. Cooke ; but in the official report of the sub-committee appointed to inquire into the case, while its members are unani-

mously of opinion "that the resident medical officer has come scathless out of the inquiry, and that the interests of the institution are safe in his hands," yet Miss Turriff was not even censured—in fact rather complimented for her zeal. Miss Turriff had threatened to resign if Dr. Cooke remained, but did not do so. That gentleman, however, took an early opportunity of retiring into private practice, leaving, as I saw entered on the minutes, with a most gratifying testimonial from the committee as to his conduct as resident medical officer for three years at the Alfred Hospital.

I think that the very fact of Miss Turriff being retained in her position after the gross charge she brought against Dr. Cooke is a conclusive proof of the influence of the Hon. James Service. He's a man who will not "go back on" his friends. I may say that an inquest had been held as to the death of the man in question, and a verdict exonerating the staff had been found. Miss Turriff was now present mistress of the position, and remains such, although these unhappy squabbles—what Mr. Service wisely calls "heartburnings and strife, which should have no existence in a charitable institution"—still went on. A great deal has been said in the papers lately about "the Nurse Thompson case." She brought an action against the committee of the hospital for unjust dismissal, but was nonsuited. I think all this sort of actions foolish and ill-advised, but wish that it had been tried on its merits, so that the public might have had open testimony as to the state of things at the hospital. But the committee do not want any inquiry. Without expressing any opinion as to the merits, I have an inveterate dislike to any case being stopped by legal technicalities. I would have everything tried out fair, square, and publicly, mulcting a plaintiff heavily for vexatious or

frivolous actions. It was hatred of legal quibblings which cut short my study of the law, otherwise I fancy I might now be a judge. One thing I know, from written records which came under my notice. Nurse Thompson's evidence in the inquiry caused by the matron's charge against Dr. Cooke was entirely opposed to that lady's. Disputes arose, and the nurse, who appears to have the good word of all the medical staff, had to go to satisfy the will of the matron. What was sauce for one was certainly not so for the other. The only conclusion I can arrive at—and I should be glad if a public inquiry will prove that I am wrong—is that the Hon. James Service and Miss Turriff "run" the Alfred Hospital. The last public dispute was a complaint brought by the secretary of the matron's general demeanour and disinclination to co-operate in the general satisfactory working of the institution. This report is printed in full in *The Argus* of July 15, 1876, and, from a three weeks' study of character, I believe it to be a fair one. But Mr. Tate, who is as mild and peaceful a gentleman as ever drew breath, and who must have been hard pushed to complain of anyone, only got a sort of snubbing from the committee, and the matron got another compliment for "her extreme zeal." Mr. Service, don't you know Talleyrand's caution against that? "Extreme zeal" has ruined many institutions, social, political, and religious. After Dr. Cooke left, the new medical officers resigned, because they would not "mess" with the matron, which elicited from Mr. Service the letter published in *The Argus* of July 19, that "the medical officers, the matron, the secretary, and the dispenser are all heads of departments, and directly responsible to the committee of management, and no one else." This admission is sufficient to account for any amount of disorganization and demoralization which may exist at the Alfred

Hospital. I am only surprised that there is not more. Mr. Service, however, is a good business man, and will take care that any institution he is connected with is ostensibly a first-class concern; and so, up to the present moment, although injury may have been done individually by the matron's tyranny, and although the sight of that lady stamping her feet, and exchanging a few mild remarks with a nurse, telling her "to take a month's notice," is not a pleasant one, still, owing to lucky accident, the management has not yet run aground, and to the casual visitor everything is satisfactory.

How long will this last, however? The dispute mentioned above, which is reported in *The Argus* of October 7 (Miss Turriff delicately hinting that the reporter present was an enemy of hers, and "a friend of that wretch Brown," a former dispenser, hence the paragraph), ended in the nurse and wardsman of the male surgical ward leaving immediately. For nearly two days this, the most important ward in the place, *was left in charge of a patient*. After that a temporary nurse was appointed, but it was not until ten days had passed that any satisfactory arrangements for attending to this ward were made. Had it not been for the fact that Dr. Glen-dinning personally performed many offices of "dressing," and the like, which, in most hospitals, are left to the nurses, I am sure that for that time great suffering, and injurious effect, must have been endured by the patients. The matron, appointing all the nurses, has sole control of their disposition, and in this respect nominally acts as, what she really is, lady superintendent. Now, as a rule, I don't believe in them. There may be a few admirable, energetic, well-balanced ladies who can "run" a charity or institution; but the majority are too much governed by their feelings and emotions. When,

too, they have an infirmity of temper—and Miss Turriff's best friends will admit this—little episodes, of which the above is a sample, will occur. I declare here that, for at least ten days, the male surgical ward was left in the hands of incompetent people, and I do not believe that during that time medicines and diets were properly administered. This happened through the absurdity of trusting arbitrary power to a lady with a temper. A head is wanted at the Alfred Hospital, one to be held responsible, and hold others responsible to him. In this case of a ward being left without proper nurses, I do not know if Mr. Tate would be held responsible in any way. But as he had not the power of appointing them, I do not see how he could be. The separate heads of department theory does not work at all well; for, in an institution like the Alfred Hospital, one department must necessarily be in intimate connexion with another. To carry this out properly, though, a House Committee should be appointed, to visit at regular and irregular times the wards and offices, and see that "the separate heads of departments," responsible to no one, are doing their duty. What is the fact, however? The committee of management is supposed to meet weekly, but often a quorum is not formed, and Mr. Tate had always to rush round town every Friday morning to shepherd committeemen. When there is a quorum the business is generally quite formal, and no inspection of the house is made. Once, however, whilst I was there, Mr. Service went around the wards, which was considered a most extraordinary proceeding on his part, not happening once in twelve months. There is no apparent interest in the institution shown by members of the committee. Mr. Service, doubtless, knows what goes on through Miss Turriff; but as to the rest, "the heads of departments" may

follow their own sweet will—the secretary, who also bears the nominal name of superintendent, being the scapegoat if anything goes wrong.

Moreover, it has been well pointed out that, even with the very best responsible management, a vigilant and incessant supervision of the internal economy of charitable institutions by committees and visitors should always be considered. These may have been originally well administered, but through want of oversight the zeal of subordinates becomes relaxed. A careless committee of management is a great evil, and I think new blood is wanted at the Alfred Hospital, as year after year present members have been elected who support Mr. Service. Now, I don't wish to be hard on this hon. gentleman. I respect his talents and energy; but what with his political and business engagements, I think it is rather too much to expect him to run the Alfred Hospital single handed. I have criticised the present system of management, and propose in its stead that in vogue at London hospitals, which is also, I believe, imitated at the Melbourne General Hospital. The chief there is called a "house governor;" here he might be, like Mr. M'Cutcheon at the Benevolent Asylum, superintendent and secretary. This official should have control over all the staff, to the extent, as regards medical officers, in seeing that they did their duty and observed the rules. He should reside on the premises or in a detached building, and be responsible for the proper conduct of the institution to the committee of management. The meetings should be monthly instead of weekly, but a visiting sub-committee should be appointed, who would individually be able to find their way about the building without assistance. The matron should be a matron, that is housekeeper and chief nurse, and not "a lady superintendent." To a certain extent

the matron, as well as the nurses, should be under the control of the medical officers. Anyone will see how important it is that the nurses should be strictly held accountable to the doctors for carrying out orders, and that no other counter authority should here step in, as happens at the Alfred Hospital. Whilst on this subject of hospital management, I will throw out the suggestion—doubtless not a fresh one—that a Government Inspector of Hospitals is urgently needed, and that official auditors should examine the accounts. Certain members of the committees, too, should be nominated by the Government, which would prevent, as far as possible, any public institution becoming a privately-managed one, as the Alfred Hospital is at present. Members of a “supply committee” should decidedly not be allowed to furnish the hospital with goods. They should sacrifice either their philanthropy or their profits.

Looking back through files of old newspapers, I find that it was first proposed that the Alfred Hospital should be a convalescent institution, and that large sums of money were collected for that purpose. There was, however, an opposition party, of which Mr. Service and Dr. Blair were at the head, who wanted a general hospital erected. They obtained the promise of a grant from Government; and the Duke was to lay the foundation-stone. All this, I believe, originated through certain professional jealousy in connexion with the Melbourne Hospital. A convalescent institution would have been subordinate to that. Messrs. Blair and Co. wanted an establishment in which they could reign supreme. Accordingly, the convalescent party gave way, and the Alfred Hospital, in its present form, was evolved from the brains of the committee; and when the Duke laid the foundation-stone he was lectured

to the effect that it was to perpetuate "the welcome visit and providential and merciful deliverance which you experienced in a period of imminent danger." Also, the committee, combining business and pleasure, were thus enabled to "express their grateful remembrance of your Royal Highness, their loyalty to the Throne, and devoted attachment to your august mother, the Queen of England, while they accomplish an object which had been ardently desired by many of the citizens of Melbourne and suburbs." I've got that address off by heart, as I had to make a copy of it for the Rev. Dr. Rees, one of the original committee, and who draughted the address. If there is one thing I hate more than another it is copying anything. How I blessed the lengthened periods which I had to transfer on to large foolscap, and rule off neatly with red ink. However, I obeyed Mr. Tate's orders. I may be reproached for my present treatment of that confiding secretary. I may be an archtraitor, to whose mind thoughts of his prototype, Judas Iscariot, so naturally present themselves; but I always obeyed orders. In this connection I have a sort of idea that my copy of the address, now possessed by Dr. Rees, will have some slight value and interest, irrespective of the subject. The rev. doctor had better raffle it for the benefit of his church. This address struck the keynote of the theory promulgated by the committee, that a new general hospital was urgently needed in Melbourne, and especially on the south side of the Yarra. This was debated at the time, and has been the subject of query since. Secretaries' reports I don't take much heed of—they can be fixed to suit circumstances. As regards the local need for a hospital, this institution more than amply fills any such demand. Of accidents, as I have before shown, there are few. Out-patients may be numerous,



but a dispensary would equally well serve their turn. For many years I do not think there is any need for a general hospital on the south side of the Yarra, when, as I believe, there are plenty of beds vacant in the Melbourne Hospital. The average number of in-patients, in the Alfred Hospital, may be taken at from 70 to 80 per month; and from the 1st of January to the 30th September, in this year (1876), 268 in-patients (or a third of all) were admitted, who resided in Collingwood, Carlton, Fitzroy, Melbourne, or elsewhere, out of the district, which the Alfred Hospital is supposed to supply. These patients might just as well have gone to the Melbourne Hospital—not but that I think, in many things, they were better treated at the Alfred.

I have before shown that seldom are any refused admission into this institution. Every attempt seems to be made to swell the number of cases, and in this the management is ably seconded by the visiting medical staff. These gentlemen kindly send about 50 per cent. of the in-patients to the institution, greatly to the disgust of Sizar Elliot, J.P., the collector, who cannot then “be down on the party who recommends them for a subscription.” I will not say but what many may be deserving cases, but many are certainly able to pay for medical attendance. Men who are in friendly society clubs have no need to go to the hospital, except for surgical treatment. I must say I rather question the morality of club surgeons, members of the staff of the Alfred Hospital, recommending men on their sick list to the institution. Several such cases came under my notice—one especially of a man employed in a warehouse, earning £3 a week, owning his own cottage, and receiving, when sick, £1 a week from his club. Such a man certainly should not be in want of charity, yet his

club doctor sent him into the hospital for a trifling sickness. They do this, however, because without it the beds would be half empty. One Collins-street doctor is noted for this. Almost every day a patient would come with a note, written in the beautiful hand of the doctor, saying, "Please put bearer in one of my beds." That's the formula, the bearer perhaps coming from Fitzroy or Collingwood, an interesting case for operation or study. Thus the Alfred Hospital fulfils the mission which Dr Blair intended it should do. Let me render justice to him, however. He has collected, I understand, large sums towards its support. The sad case of Mrs. Conley happened just before I went into the hospital. I know that Dr. Glendinning made a *post mortem* examination when the particulars were discovered. All this was kept very quiet, however, and but for the professional jealousy existing between members of the staff, I do not think it would ever have been made public. But two of the honorary surgeons love each other dearly, and publicly, and in the press, state their convictions of each other's merits. One of these gentlemen is not on speaking terms with several of his *confrères*, and yet they will meet round "a case," and criticise, if not obstruct, an operation.

However, all this has been publicly investigated, and it is not my province to write on what I do not know. One thing is evident. Dr. Robertson, not by any means a rash operator, but a steady able surgeon, would have got on much better without the presence of a gentleman with whom he does not speak. Such a one eyeing and examining an operation, must, I imagine, slightly flurry the strongest nerves. I believe, from the evidence, that Mrs. Conley would have died any way, but there is another case which requires investigation. The other day a Collins-street surgeon, emulous of the fame of

another distinguished practitioner, and in pursuance of a boast, performed the operation of lithotomy *with a pocket knife*. I do not say but that the knife was perhaps as useful as a scalpel ; it all depends upon the operator and the result. The boast indicates rashness, and the man died, the parts operated upon being, by order, kept under lock and key by the house surgeon, Dr. Glendinning. At the last meeting of the Medical Society of Victoria, Dr. Blair exhibited a bone taken from a man's shoulder, also the patient, whom I let out of the hospital for that special occasion. Dr. Blair said the bone was diseased ; that it was a splendid operation, and that the man was getting better. The voice of the meeting was against him, and the vote seemed to be that the bone extracted was *not* diseased, but sound, the cause of complaint being left in. There was great discussion about this at the hospital, and I am sorry to say the general opinion is that the last state of that patient is worse than the first. He is still in the hospital, and doesn't seem to know what a subject of discussion he is. He told me that Dr. Blair assured him he was getting better, and was hopeful accordingly. I am afraid all these little incidents will weaken the confidence of the public in the medical staff of the Alfred Hospital, which will not be increased by the publication of the fact that some of them will just drive up, enter their names in the visiting medical officers' book, and then off again, never going into the wards. It is true, there might not be anything for them to do ; but such a proceeding has a slightly deceptive appearance.

Generally, however, I think the patients in the Alfred Hospital have a pretty good time of it. It is a decidedly pleasant place. The wards are lofty, well ventilated, and not by any means overcrowded with beds. Pictures and flowers give a

gay appearance to the place. Books and papers are plentifully supplied to all, and the consolations of religion or tracts are always available. Ordinary visitors and patients' friends are only admitted on three days in the week, but priests and ministers, and a number of ladies who are styled "religious visitors," have the run of the place at all hours. Anyone could pass in on a bundle of tracts. I am bound to say that the Roman Catholic ladies were most assiduous in their attentions to the sick. I had, in my character of a rather polite hall-porter, several conversations with some of these ladies, who little knew they were speaking to that "enemy of God and man, the Catholic Church, and the Irish race," the "Vagabond." The Rev. W. H. Quirk, P.P., of St. Kilda, was often around. I had to send to him once to visit a sick Irish girl, and he was on the spot before the return of the messenger. Mr. Quirk is a real fine, educated gentleman, whom I liked very much, faithful to his duties, fulfilling his mission according to the lights of the Church of Rome. I wondered if he detected the hoofs or horns of Mephistopheles about me. *Ah ! Padre mio*, I'm afraid I'm past the reach of your holy water ! Protestant ladies were not quite so diligent in visiting the hospital. The reverend gentleman who is the appointed chaplain was round sometimes, at uncertain intervals, otherwise it appeared to be in nobody's parish. I was told, too, that clergymen often tried to get out of the trouble of visiting the sick when sent for—far different in this to Father Quirk. Even Milligan, the Orangeman, testified to this—so I put it on record. From my own experience, I can only say that when, one morning, a poor woman, ostensibly belonging to the Church of England, was dying, and I ran to the Domain-road to fetch the Rev. W. P. Pearce, of South Yarra Church,

he made no hesitation, but came with alacrity at once. When we got to the hospital, however, the patient had died, and evaded all rites of the Church. I understand, however, that there is some little difficulty as to the parish in which the hospital stands. Clergymen of the Church of England have a good deal of professional etiquette, and won't poach on each other's domains. The priests of the Church of Rome are not so particular, and go soul-catching whenever and wherever they get the chance. There are, however, lots of free lances of the Protestant creeds—Scripture readers and such, who were often at the hospital. Sunday was a great day with them. At first, not knowing, I was always "sticking them up" for anything contraband. Their horrified denials of having any spirits or tobacco concealed about them was very amusing. I am afraid, however, I got into rather evil repute with some of them. One worthy gentleman I offended mortally, and I know he is my enemy for life. I was one Sunday afternoon standing on the steps. I was passing in the friends of patients, when I saw the individual in question going round the side of the building towards one of the wards, instead of coming in at the front door. "This way, if you please, sir!" I shouted. He stopped and then went on. "Come this way, sir!" I repeated in a military tone of command. He came. If he hadn't, I'd have fetched him. When he got near the door I saw the books under his arm, and the pious glare in his eye, which spoke depths of texts and psalms. I said, "Sir, I beg your pardon, I believe you go in as religious visitor. I did not know you, and presume you are aware of the rules. No spirits or tobacco allowed here. In future kindly come in through the front door." My man gasped with indignation. "I've never been spoken to like this before. I've been coming here three years,

and the Secretary wouldn't say as much as you have done." "Ah! that was a mistake of his," said I; "things are altered now. I require everyone to come through the front door." "You're most impertinent, sir, and don't know your place. You will hear further of this." I was awfully amused that a small tradesman, in the guise of a religious visitor, should bully me, so I made him an oration on the subject of duty in general, my duty in this particular, and his duty not to interfere with my duty. I'm afraid he didn't see it, but it amused some of the bystanders, and he left, muttering blessings upon me. I mention this incident, as it was the only time I was ever even accused of impertinence in the discharge of my duties. Generally I was too polite, causing comparisons unfavourable to my predecessors to be made.

Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday are the visiting days at the Alfred Hospital. Sunday, however, when I had to hoist the flag, is the popular day on which, between the hours of three and five, the wards are thronged with friends of the patients. The majority of visitors bring perambulators and babies, and about thirty per cent. attempt to introduce contraband articles. I had to stand at the door all Sunday afternoon and "stick up" every visitor. "What have you got in that bag, sir?" "Oranges." "Pass in, sir." "What are these, ma'am?" "Lollies." "You will have to leave them here; nothing but oranges are allowed to be taken in." At the end of an hour I would have quite a collection of confiscated articles. Bags of "lollies" and cakes, eggs, corned beef, and cold pudding—this latter a very popular, because, I presume, unwholesome, delicacy. Amongst many it must be the idea that patients are starved at the Alfred Hospital. Bottles of porter and colonial wine were also attempted to be smuggled in, and often success-

fully ; as, of course, I could not search everyone. I had received particular instructions from the Secretary on this subject, and I was, I believe, far more strict than my predecessor, as on the first Sunday I made many captures. Afterwards the visitors became more wary, and concealed the forbidden luxuries, and I had to be as vigilant as a Custom-house officer in detecting offenders. One woman I found out with a bottle of porter concealed under her baby's clothes. This was not a very pleasant occupation, although I tried my best to do my duty with courtesy towards all. But I got soundly rated by many women ; the younger ones especially presuming on their sex. To men, I could explain that the rule was made for the benefit of the patients—that cold pudding, which some healthy men might eat with impunity, would be poison to a sick man. As a rule, in a few words, and by appealing to his sense, I could convince a male visitor that he was doing wrong, and that I was only fulfilling my duty. But women, alas ! are not always logical, and I received a good deal of abuse for the zeal I displayed in confiscating contraband. The rule, however, prohibiting visitors bringing patients even apparently harmless luxuries is, I think, a very good one. I found that the allowance of “extras” and “medical comforts” was a very liberal one, and a patient's recovery might be retarded through the injudicious kindness of a friend. In this connection, I think the favourable manner in which hospital cures compare with those in private practice may be accounted for by the fact, that the hospital doctor has his orders as to regimen strictly carried out ; whereas the private practitioner often finds his treatment neutralized by the mistaken affection of a mother or wife, who will give the patient what “he fancies.”

But forbidden articles, medicines, &c., were even forwarded

to patients through the post. The Mercury who visits the Alfred Hospital is a wonderful character. He is reputed to be a scion of royalty, was an officer of the English army, and afterwards served as captain in the New Zealand war. Now he is perfectly content to earn his living as a postman, feeling, no doubt, at home in the red coat. A morning or two after I had commenced my duties he handed me a little package, about the size of a pen-box, addressed to a patient. It was given to the ward nurse—I, as a new chum, not suspecting any evil. However, when, a few days afterwards, a similar package arrived, I was curious. "Captain," said I, "do you bring many of these?" "Oh! twice a week often." When the nurse came down I instructed her to make the patient open it in her presence and ascertain the contents. She said they were pills which he had been getting for a long time, and which he ought not to have. Asking her afterwards about this, I found she had given the patient the package without saying anything. On the next occasion I, after consulting Mr. Tate, took the parcel up to the ward. "Here is a letter and package for you, sir," said I, "and, as it is understood that you have been getting these for some time, the Secretary wishes you to open it in my presence, that we may be assured there is nothing wrong." "Oh! it's only a little snuff which a friend sends me every week," was the reply. Now, I suppose snuff ought to be confiscated, as the use of tobacco is prohibited under penalty of a patient being immediately expelled. This I think hard; as in some cases, when men have been used to the weed, I believe it would have a beneficial effect upon them. I have seen tobacco supplied to convalescents in French hospitals. So when the patient produced a paper of snuff from the package, I had not the heart to say one word.



against it. But there was a little box, which he slipped under the sheet whilst showing the snuff. "Please let me see what is in there, sir?" "Only a few lollies," said he, opening the box, which contained a dozen little cubes of a dark-coloured substance. "I have no wish," said I, "to strictly bind down a gentleman who should know better than I what is good for him. If you say, sir, that there is nothing injurious in there, I'll say nothing about it." "Oh, no; they are just cocoa lollies; they do me good to suck them." "All right, sir; good morning," said I, taking up one of the "lollies," and putting it in my mouth. "Spit it out if you don't like it," said the patient nervously, and as soon as I was outside the door I did spit it out. My suspicions I had practically confirmed, and on taking the "lolly" to the dispenser (Mr. Frost), he informed me that it was a preparation of belladonna, containing enough to kill me. But that the patient was very ill, I would have had a magnificent piece of fooling. I know the action and symptoms of vegetable poisons, and, I think, I could have simulated them. "The Vagabond," poisoned in the discharge of his duty, would have been a capital "line." I did think of this for a few moments, as really the patient deserved a fright for his deceit; but sorrow for his state kept me from taking advantage of this grand chance. I took the "lolly" to Dr. Hearn, who had the box confiscated, and ordered all packages for this patient to be stopped in future. I was afterwards nicely abused for my zeal in this matter; but I considered I did my duty, and I quote this, not only as an amusing incident, but to show that I had great opportunities of studying the inner life of the hospital. In many respects it would have been much more pleasant to me to let things slide along in the old groove; but, unfortunately, the

spirit of duty is strong within me. Whilst in the hospital I endeavoured to faithfully fulfil my office, both for the benefit of the patients and my superiors. Now that I am a free "Vagabond" once more, my duty is a public one, and I fight it out on that line.

The patient who attempted to poison me, but to whom I have no ill-will, and am only sorry that I was forced to interfere in his affairs, is a gentleman and professional man, and his conduct only shows how foolish sick men are, and how much a firm nurse is needed. But the patients at the Alfred Hospital are of all classes. The inevitable Chinaman was there; a Spanish half-caste from Manila, who spoke no English, and whose bastard lingo I could scarcely understand; a German; English, Scotch, and Irish: from gentleman to beggar, they were all treated very much alike. Many of them were very "new chums"—it grieved me to see young Irish girls, only a few months in the colony, which they had sought as their Promised Land, stricken down with consumption. An American, hailing from Buffalo, who first came out here as the driver of one of Cobb's coaches, had lain for many weary months in the hospital. I was glad that I was able to obtain some American papers from Mr. Adamson for him, and that I could distract his mind by chats as to the prospects of the Presidential election. I hope that he will pull through, and yet vote his ticket in the United States. It was a sad sight to see so many children lying racked with pain, suffering too often from Nature's irrevocable law, "the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children." Many young girls, too, I found out, were victims of their parents' crimes. These revelations, coming after what I had seen at Kew, make me more than ever in favour of strong legislation to put down certain forms

of disease and vice. I had many friends amongst the patients. Some of the girls in the female wards were glad to exchange a little playful *badinage* with me when my duties called me thither. It was natural, and the way of their sex. I am always fond of children, and my heart bled for many of them. To these, at first, the hospital must appear a dismal prison. When their friends came to see them they would often cry to be taken away. One case distressed me much. A poor little Austrian boy had been severely burnt. When the father came to see him on Sunday, the child cried bitterly. The parent groaned over him with a wondrous affection. "Take me away, papa," cried the child. Tears coursing down his face, the man said, "I must take the little one, or he will break his heart." Of course I remonstrated with him on the folly of removing the child from good treatment; but I felt myself that I could not have resisted those pleading cries and outstretched arms. Some of the children, however, were very plucky and patient. Confined to their beds, they would throw balls across the ward to each other, and generally get as much amusement out of the surroundings as possible. One Irish boy from Little Bourke-street had rare nerves. "They're going to operate on me to-morrow," said he one morning; "take a piece of bone out of my leg," and the lad spoke as coolly and cheerfully as if it were a pleasurable anticipation. Generally I had pleasant conversations with my little friends, and, with the exception of my poisoner, I do not think any inmate had any particularly hard feelings against me, although, no doubt, my action in stopping the luxuries brought in by their friends was considered a harsh proceeding on my part.

One of the nurses told me that patients grumbled a good deal here, much more than in England, and that they wanted

too much attention ; but I did not find that to be the case. Only one grumbler came under my notice, and he was promptly, and, to my mind, arbitrarily expelled. This was a navvy from the Gipps Land Railway, who was brought in with broken ribs and collar-bone. His mates had supplied him with drink on the way down, and he used some strong navvy vernacular to the ward nurse. She complained to the Secretary ; but the next morning the man was sober, and, in his rough way, apologised. I was in the ward early, and he began grumbling about his "tucker." He wanted more to eat. A navvy, I believe, is not like other men in his appetite. I told him he must ask the doctor. The man, in his conversation to me and the nurse, was rough and coarse, but only after the manner of his kind, not meaning any harm. After Dr. Glendinning had made his rounds this man's card was brought to me with "discharged for gross impertinence" written upon it. I went to the ward and made inquiries. The man said he had only asked the doctor for some more "tucker," and the nurse and some of the other patients said "he cheeked the doctor a bit." A rough navvy, with broken bones, can hardly be supposed to be particularly nice in his language, and a gentleman and a man of education certainly should not take umbrage at rash words spoken by such a man. I told Mr. Tate at the time that this was a most unjustifiable case of dismissal, and I believe he agreed with me. I may say here that every case of abuse which I imagined I discovered I immediately reported to the Secretary, as a duty I owed to the institution, whose servant I was for the time. I acted fairly in this, and do not think I bring forward a case which, as hall-porter, I have not mentioned to Mr. Tate. As a rule, however, I think patients were, if not satisfied, grateful for the attention they received in

the hospital. Gratifying proofs of this came under my notice. One Hobson's Bay fisherman, an ex-patient, sent many valuable presents of fish as some slight acknowledgment of the care he had received. In one of the donation boxes, which was opened whilst I was there, the following letter was found, dated from Prahran, and addressed to the committee :—

“Please accept this small donation of five shillings for the very great kindness I received during my stay of three days in the cottage. I am only a poor fatherless girl, having to work hard for my living, or I would give more.”

Mr. Sizar Elliott, the collector, tore up the letter, but I rescued the fragments, and treasure it as a testimony of the good there is in human nature. The mite of this “poor fatherless girl” (by the bye, five shillings would nearly pay for what she had) is a gift more precious in my eyes than the heavy cheques of gentlemen whose names are emblazoned on the subscription-lists. The testimony as to the kindness received in the cottage I believed to be very true, the nurse there being most attentive to her charges.

There is ground of complaint as to the quality of some of the provisions at the Alfred Hospital. The meat was often of a very inferior quality—decidedly not equal to that supplied at the Benevolent or Kew Asylum. We, at the servants' mess, grumbled about it, and often said we could not eat it. Certainly, then, it must not have been good for the patients. I wrote one or two letters for Mr. Tate's signature on this subject, and reported every case of complaint to him. The matron is, I believe, responsible for seeing that the stores supplied are of a good quality, and in this she failed at times. The butter (salt) was often very bad. I have taken a sample from the servant's mess in to Mr. Tate, and he has admitted that it has been very

bad. When, however, he complained to the matron about it, she produced a sample of entirely different quality. In my complaints I took the ground that as we of the servants' mess certainly did not get the worst of everything, if we grumbled and found the food bad, the patients could not be any better off. I began to be looked up to by my fellow-servants as the Berry or Longmore of the kitchen—I expect others thought me forward, and a nuisance. The manner in which I made out the butcher's orders amused me. Every morning the matron would leave a slip of paper in the office, stating what meat was wanted for the officers' mess on the next day. Accordingly, so many pounds of sirloin, quarters of lamb, &c., were inserted separately on the order made out by me under the heading "officers." They had good meat, one may be sure. With all Miss Turriff's faults she's a capital caterer, and the officers' table generally comprised all the delicacies of the season, and was well served. With inferior meat, not always improved by the cooking, and with potatoes served out in skins, the patients' dinners were not inviting, and I am not surprised that they sometimes complained thereof. However, the work in the kitchen is about the hardest done in the hospital, and I think extra help might be laid on there. In ordering the meat for the patients and servants, the amount is all lumped together—so many pounds of beef and mutton. All this would be cooked, and the portions then weighed out. There might be many pounds over, which would go into the pig-tubs. Here, as everywhere in Australia, the amount of waste in animal food was surprising. In the first place, however, this would be caused through ordering too much meat, so I began to carefully calculate and cut down the order, and I expect that for my month the butcher's bill was lighter. In the

item of milk I found out there had always been great waste. I went minutely into calculations, and cut off several gallons a day. Once or twice, when I ran it too fine, there were complaints as to scarcity; but this was caused through miscalculations on the part of the assistant cook—the head being away—and the nurses. The fact is that no one, with the exception of the Secretary and myself, understood the diet sheets and calculations, which are not easy to simple minds. When the cook returned from her holiday, however, the milk was all right, although there was no waste, as of yore. From the 1st to the 20th October, I had the satisfaction of reducing the milk account *357 quarts less than corresponding dates of the previous month, the saving to the hospital being £4 2s. 8d.* My successor, who rapidly learnt his duties, has, I believe, gone on in the way I instructed him, and the amount saved at the end of the year will be something considerable. I do not know who was exactly to blame for the former state of things. In the first place, my predecessor, who made out extravagant orders, it being easier, I presume, to strike a high average than make calculations. I don't know that the cook could be held responsible. She received such provisions as were ordered for her, served out the portions according to the list supplied, and what was over would go to the tub. Cooks always have liberal ideas as to waste. But the matron, as housekeeper, and chief over the kitchen and servants, should certainly have been aware that great waste had been going on, and that gallons of surplus milk have been poured down the drains, as a fellow-servant told me. The positive statement which I here make as to the reduction in the supply of milk, when, too, there were more patients in the hospital, is one which Mr. Service can verify by checking my own figures.

I am getting so much abused on all sides for writing what I believe to be the truth that I must blow my own trumpet. I believe I served the hospital as faithfully as any officer or servant could do, and my only desire was then, as now, the welfare of the patients. I had no easy time of it, others' work might be finished, but mine was never ended. The doctors and other servants would often play at cricket or quoits together in the grounds. I was never enabled to have a game whilst I was there. The hall-porter must always be in the office. This, however, gave me opportunities of studying the records of the institution. In the Secretary's office there was a drawer containing the effects of deceased patients. In these there was matter for a hundred romances. The fatal knife, instrument of suicide, Chinese books and letters, small sums of money, and petty articles of jewellery, love letters, photographs, and locks of hair—all these belonged to friendless ones who had died in the hospital and received a pauper's funeral, loving hearts perchance even now mourning for their absence. Do not think that I violated the secrets of the dead. I examined one book, however, which contained nothing the writer might not have shown to the world. It was "the log" record of a voyage from Liverpool this year. The incidents and humours of a sea voyage were well described, and the high spirits and confidence of a young man ready to claim his fortune in a new country was perceptible in all. The last record is on the day of landing at Melbourne. But a few weeks, and the writer was brought to the hospital; another few weeks and he was dead. In connection with the sequence, this is one of the saddest narratives I ever read. On fine evenings, however, I would sit on the stone steps, smoking my pipe, and listening to the music of the band of the Blind



Asylum. Occasionally one of my "mates" would come and sit with me, Milligan, the Orangeman, being particularly fond of my society. Now, I was always very good friends with this honest man, and I trust he will not think it is from any desire to injure him that I record the following. Milligan has the monopoly of selling bottles to the out-patients, and he is accumulating a modest pile in this business. He buys them at 2s. a dozen, and retails them at 6d. each. There is a good commission on such transactions. But stray wine bottles, &c., which may be knocking about the place, Milligan immediately seizes, and, washing them, retails as the others. It is all profit in that deal. Now, it seems to me a mean thing that, after giving advice and medicine, the institution cannot afford a bottle. I believe it is the general custom at hospitals that out-patients must provide bottles, but those who had none I would have supplied from the dispensary, charging the cost only, and, in extreme cases of poverty, giving them outright. It annoyed me beyond measure to see women toil home to fetch bottles, not having sixpence wherewithal to satisfy Milligan the obdurate. I remember an American sailor coming one day from Sandridge; his hand was badly cut. I gave him a "casualty" ticket, and after a time he passed out again. "All right, mate?" I asked. "The doctor's given me a prescription for medicine and lotion, but I want a couple of bottles. The man there wishes a shilling for them; and, to tell you the truth, I haven't a cent in the world." This was said quietly, as a mere statement of fact, not appealing to me, or as conveying any stigma to the utterer. There was the calm self-respect of a man who was in a corner, but could not help it. My soul was wroth within me, and I swore by the bones of George Washington that this thing was played out. "Hold

on, partner," said I, "I'm American too—only keep it dark. Come along ;" and I led the way to Milligan's private hoard of bottles, and supplied him with what he required. On several other occasions I looted bottles in like manner. Milligan hearing of this, protested, and wanted sixpence a-piece for them from me ; but, as a matter of principle, I showed him that half the empty bottles in the establishment were my perquisites, and that he, in fact, owed me money. Now, I should be sorry for this man to lose anything through the bottle trade being taken out of his hands, but as it at present stands, it is not a square thing. The committee had better raise his wages, and abolish the privilege of bottle-selling, giving them away instead.

I had no desire to stop three weeks in the Alfred Hospital, and after I had been there a week I thought I would give notice to leave at once. But I reckoned without my secretary. I had signed an agreement to stop a month on trial, and stay I must, or until a competent successor was found. "You see, —," said Mr. Tate, "when you've been here a little longer you'll like it better. Why can't you make yourself happy here, man? I believe I'd sooner be in your place than mine. I was congratulating myself on having got a good man at last. I haven't pressed you as to your past life, as your recommendations here were good ; but I think you've been decently educated, and you just suit me." I murmured that my parents, though poor, were honest (shades of my ancestors, forgive me !) and had early sent me to a charity school. I was deeply sensible of Mr. Tate's kindness, but had the offer of more remunerative employment. However, Mr. Tate was in no hurry to obtain a successor, and held me to my bond not to leave him in the lurch. I pride myself on keeping my word, and, besides, I had no wish

to upset the domestic economy of the Alfred Hospital by leaving it without that important individual—a hall-porter; and so I had to serve out fully three weeks before my successor was considered competent enough to take the onerous responsibilities of my post. Having just perfected myself in the duties, I had the hard task of teaching them to others. I had two good pupils, however; and my successor, I understand, has taken up my mantle, and is every inch the *ne plus ultra* of a hospital clerk. I devoted a good deal of attention to his education as such. On Hospital Sunday we had fine fun. I was instructing my pupil how to treat Sunday visitors, this being an extra busy day, and I believe I succeeded in affording a good deal of amusement to many. The Hospital Sunday Committee had sent a box to be placed at the door, which was duly done. But over our own donation-box in the hall I had placed a card, written in my fairest hand, "Hospital Sunday. Donations from visitors requested." When people passed the first box and entered the hall, I immediately waylaid them in this wise, "Pardon me, sir (or madam), will you kindly look at this? Now, that is my writing. I think donation is very well written. What do you say?" My cool impertinence extracted a good many shillings from the pockets of visitors, working people giving liberally. Many ladies, no doubt, were shocked at the manner in which I addressed them. I trust they will pardon it in consideration of the good cause. Now, this was rather playing a practical joke on the Hospital Sunday Committee. In their box at the gate they only got 4s. 6d.; whereas in our box, in the hall, I obtained over £4. Very wrong of me, no doubt, to pester visitors as I did. Sizar Elliot, J.P., the collector, was rejoiced, as he got 8s. (10 per cent.) through my exertions.

I sincerely hope that there will, at an early date, be a public inquiry into the administration of the Alfred Hospital, which will embrace the question of its present and future form. It is too late to turn it into a convalescent hospital, which is sadly needed in Melbourne, but which would be better situated on the hills at the back of the city. I believe, however, that it would be most advantageously worked in connection with the Melbourne Hospital. It is the old story of an institution supported by the public money and governed by a private committee, which is so apt to degenerate into a "one man" concern. Even as the Immigrants' Home and the Benevolent Asylum, are the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals. These institutions would, I believe, be governed better, and certainly more economically, if amalgamated. I think a Royal Commission will have to go into this subject some day. However, as regards the Alfred Hospital, something should be done at once, and many changes should be enforced, which, however, I will not suggest, or I shall be accused of "unfairness." Any properly-conducted board of inquiry will soon find out where the defects of administration lie. It is a pleasing reminiscence that I left the hospital with—as far as I know—the goodwill of all the officers, servants, and patients. Milligan gushed over me, one of the girls said I was going "just as we were getting to like you," the cook consoled me with a hot mince pie, some of the patients expressed their sorrow, and Mr. Tate mourned in secret. I had so jesuitically endeared myself to this gentleman that, on the very last day of my residence at the hospital, he offered to give me a yearly sum out of his own pocket if I would remain, and in this offer I think he had the interests of the institution at heart. But he also informed me that I was sus-

pected. "It was said to-day, at the dinner-table, that 'The Vagabond' was here, and that it was either you or the new fellow. The matron said *he'd been bribed to come here.*" "How absurd!" I said. "Well, yes; I don't believe it," said Mr. Tate, most unsuspecting of men. "You see I've got to know all about it. 'The Vagabond' would be a most mysterious fellow if he had been in all these places he writes about; but I've learnt that one man writes all these articles, but gets his information from some one inside, whom *The Argus* pays well. Now, I might be 'The Vagabond,' or Miss Turriff, or Dr. Glendinning—nobody knows." I avoided the subject; and when I left I am sure none of the officers were aware, or even suspicious, of my identity. My departure, however, awoke the suspicions of "Jenny," and she attempted to entrap me in conversation. My successor, I found, shared with me the suspicions of some of the servants. He was quite a swell; but the Alfred Hospital is getting "high-toned" now-a-days. The morning of my departure a lady arrived in a carriage and pair, driven by another lady, who affectionately kissed her on alighting. Miss Turriff came down and ordered me to "take those boxes up to the nurse's room in number six ward." Always happy to wait on the fair sex, I did as I was told, although one of my mates told me I was a fool to do it, as it was no business of mine, and the matron had no right to order me about. I only laughed, and wished I could remain to make the acquaintance of the new nurse. The following testimonials I received a couple of days before I left. There was then no question as to my identity, and they were given in all good faith. I thank Messrs. Tate and Hearn for their kind wishes. I really believe Miss Turriff and Dr. Glendinning would have given me testimonials if I had

asked them. I hope in my next situation I shall not disgrace my character earned in the Alfred Hospital.

“Alfred Hospital, Oct. 18, 1876.

“——— has served this institution in the capacity of hall-porter and clerk since the 26th ult., having been engaged for a month on trial ; but as he has received an offer of a more lucrative situation, I have released him from his engagement, though with very great reluctance, as he has suited me in every respect. I can confidently recommend him as being industrious, obliging, smart, and steady, as well as an accurate clerk.

“HENRY TATE, Secretary.”

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“Alfred Hospital, Oct. 18, 1876.

“——— has been acting as hall-porter in this hospital for the past few weeks. During that time he has displayed the greatest zeal and ability in the discharge of his duties, and has been always very kind to the patients with whom he has come in contact. I am glad to hear that he has received a more lucrative appointment, and hope that I shall hear of his future welfare.

“WM. E. S. HEARN, M.B.,  
“Resident Physician, Alfred Hospital.”

Upon receiving these flattering testimonials, I began to feel that I was getting almost too respectable, and that I should have to break out and do something disreputable, or the public

would begin to think that I was a fraud, and only half a "Vagabond."

After the publication in the *Argus* of these articles on the Alfred Hospital, a long newspaper correspondence took place between the Hon. James Service and myself. I was accused of wilfully making all sorts of misstatements, and of having been "got at," an insult which I have not forgotten. I think the result of that correspondence proved that substantially all my charges were correct. On many matters of opinion I may be held to err ; but on questions of fact, I believe, I am generally exact. I certainly had no wish to injure individuals or the institution. I have altered and modified several statements in the foregoing, my sole desire being neither to "extenuate nor set down aught in malice."

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### PAUPER FUNERALS.

IN my articles on the Alfred Hospital, I endeavoured to show what sort of treatment a patient under the doctor's hands received at that institution. Good or bad, I leave the public to judge. I will now point out how an unfortunate inmate, past all human skill, fares and is disposed of. If a member of the Roman Catholic faith, he may be sure of receiving the rites of his Church, for Father Quirk is very assiduous in his attendance at the hospital, and immediately answers any sudden call. But a Protestant *in articulo mortis* stands a good chance of going to his account "unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd," without the aid of sacrament or prayer. At the Alfred Hospital the majority of the patients, who are not Roman Catholics, are

supposed to be members of the Church of England, and the Rev. Mr. Thomson is the chaplain reputed to administer to their spiritual wants. But he attends at his own convenience, and at other times the country has to be scoured to secure the presence of a clergyman. How this works is shown by the following.

On the 30th October the hall-porter sent the following communication to the incumbent of St. Matthew's, Prahran, in which parish the hospital is, I believe, situated :—"Memo. from Miss Turriff, Matron Alfred Hospital. Requests the attendance of the Rev. Mr. Walker, at the hospital, on two patients—one requiring the sacrament. Mr. Thomson objects to come except on his regular visit; there is, consequently, a difficulty in obtaining the services of a Church of England clergyman." Mr. Walker sent a written reply that illness prevented his attendance; but that Mr. Winn, of Christ Church, South Yarra, would be likely to attend, if asked. Mr. Winn was sent to, but, not being in priest's orders, could not administer the Holy Communion; and then Mr. Pearce was called upon. He attended, but, owing to the delay, one of the patients was dead. Now, I am not, I am afraid, a pious man; but in this Christian country, where the last rites of the Church are supposed to be of avail or comfort, I say that such incidents as the above are scandalous, and should not occur.

The patient being dead, what happens to him? The first thing done is to communicate with his friends, and ascertain if they are able or willing to bury him. If not, he receives a pauper's funeral at the Melbourne General Cemetery. The hall-porter or secretary sends a notice containing full particulars as to name, age, sex, denomination, &c., to the secretary of the Cemetery trustees, and the undertaker is advised to



be in attendance with a coffin at a certain hour. The person who contracts for the Alfred Hospital interments resides in Simpson's-road, and has to come from thence and take the body to the Cemetery for the magnificent sum of £1 a case. His contract runs thus :—"The coffin to be 1in. pine or deal, firmly nailed, bottom and lid screwed with six screws each. To be 6ft. long (more or less), 1ft. high, and 1ft. 6in. broad, with stamped lead plate, blacked all over. The undertaker to supply one-horse hearse in which to remove the bodies from the dead-house to the Melbourne General Cemetery when required, on receiving notice from the secretary." It must be acknowledged that this is a very cheap contract, and that the undertaker cannot make much out of it. Whilst at the hospital I had grave doubts as to the manner in which the funerals were conducted, and I closely questioned the undertaker. He acknowledged that the clergymen who attended at the Cemetery do not attend each funeral, but said "the parson prays over five or six at a time." This made me curious, and I determined on the first possible occasion to ascertain for myself how hospital funerals were conducted. The investigation has led me into the consideration of the general conduct of "public funerals" at the Cemetery.

It was on one of the hot-wind days that I took cab to Carlton to await the arrival of a funeral from the Alfred Hospital. The Melbourne General Cemetery is a pleasant place enough. Flowers bloom luxuriantly, and praiseworthy efforts have been made in the cultivation of trees and shrubs. In time there will be shade therefrom, but at present all vegetation is rather dwarfed. Considering that this is the chief necropolis of this great city, it is not half large enough ; and even with the present system of crowding

the graves together it is rapidly filling up. Another Cemetery, further removed from Melbourne, will, in a few years, be needed. This compares unfavourably with Kensal Green, Père le Chaise, Greenwood, New York, and Lone Mountain at San Francisco. A stranger, knowing the extreme youth of this city, and that another general burial-ground formerly existed, is astonished at the number of graves. I strolled around through the different compartments reserved for the various Christian sects. Even in death, it appears, these must not mingle together. The Chinese section seems strange to a European, with the curious-shaped stoves, in which paper is burnt in certain seasons of the year in honour of the dead. The Church of England department is well kept, with a profusion of flowers and shrubs around the graves. Loving care is evidently lavished upon many of them. There are many very handsome and well-known tombs and monuments in this section which I greatly admired. One thing, however, much disgusted me. It is not, I know, peculiar to the colony, but it has assumed larger and more aggressive proportions than at any other place which I remember. This is the abominable prominence with which stonemasons advertize themselves upon their works. The undertakers might just as well have their names inscribed on every fashionable monument erected over bodies they had put through. It is very pleasant, no doubt, to the "architect" to see his name cut and gilded on one of the most beautiful tombs in the Cemetery. It is a priceless advertisement, but one which should not be allowed. I would not permit it for a moment on any tomb which I might order. It is an insult and a desecration. I have been told that the trustees of the Cemetery should object to this. No doubt they should ; but the individuals who erect these tombs and monuments

should first have courage, and boldly beard the mason or architect who should dare to attempt to advertise himself on the stone or marble they had dedicated to the memory of lost ones. Public opinion wants rousing on this point.

I like the Burke and Wills monument. The rough mass of granite reminds me, in its conception, of the rude cairn erected to the memory of the Confederate dead in the Cemetery at Richmond, Virginia. In their stern simplicity, both are more appropriate than costly mausoleums, and are fitting tributes to heroism. Close by this, I was pained to find a human bone in the path, covered with fresh mould, having apparently dropped from some soil which was being carted away. This was taken out of some "family grave" which was being opened to receive a fresh inmate. Wreaths of immortelles and withered bouquets of flowers were on many of the tombs, instancing the constant affection of survivors. All about the place grave-diggers were at work, each protected from the scorching heat by a movable canvas-frame erected above them. On such a hot day as this, when the wind was like nothing but a blast from a fiery furnace, grave-digging must, indeed, have been hard work. I wandered around through the departments of the various sects. In many there were some old and rude tombs. Rough wooden crosses were placed above where poor Irish emigrants lay. In many cases these were broken, and the graves altogether in a disorderly condition. I think the Cemetery trustees should keep all the stones or other erections, as well as the graves, in order. Everywhere I was struck with the manner in which the graves were crowded together. As I was in search of the Potter's Field, where the poor are buried, I, after a time, made my way to the lodge, and interviewed the porter or gate-keeper, a very polite Irishman.

We agreed upon the weather and general topics, and then I turned the conversation on to funerals. "That's a free burial there," said he, pointing to a shabby hearse just passing out of the gate. "He's buried in the Catholic ground on a justice's order. The priest will be here by-and-by to read the service over him." I turned the conversation on to Protestant paupers, and was told they were mostly buried in the Church of England public ground in the extreme north-eastern portion of the Cemetery. "The clergyman gets 8s. for each case, that's the Government contract, and I'd like to do it for the money," said my informant. I asked if he attended every funeral, or if the bodies were taken to the chapel. "Oh, no! You can't call them funerals, they're just burials. The clergyman waits till he gets a lot, and reads the service over them" was the reply. I turned my steps towards "LL" department, where pauper and public funerals—that is, where the friends are too poor to pay for a whole grave—take place. The poor at first appear to have been scattered, impartially, amongst the rich—Dives and Lazarus lying side by side—the one known by his costly monument, and the other recognized only by a number, on a little iron tablet, stuck at the head of so many graves. But now each denomination has its public ground, where paupers and poor people lie heaped up—three or four adults in a single grave. There is no rule as to children and infants; they stow as many as it will hold into a grave.

I found LL section to be rather wild and rough—far different in outward appearance to the elegant reserve at the other end of the Cemetery. Hundreds of bodies are here packed in side by side, with only a foot between each grave. For the sake of economy, only every other fourth grave bears

a number, and as there are three adults and many infants in each, it must be rather hard work to find out the exact resting-place of anyone. There are small tombstones erected over some, others have the names painted on the tablets, and floral offerings are plentiful. But the grave-digger there said, "I call all that foolery. What's the use of sticking up a monyment over three? You don't know which is the one you're after. That sort of thing ain't any use, unless you have a grave to yourself comfortable." I merely record his opinion. Hamlet-like, I entered into conversation with this man, but did not get much out of him. "The ground was blessed hard, stiff clay, and marl, and stone. It 'ud sometimes take a man all day to dig 2ft. But they never thought a man had done enough. There had been no funerals that day, but yesterday afternoon there was one. The clergyman would most likely come to-day." That was all I got out of him. Part of the old graves in this section is overgrown with moss and shrubs, and is in a very neglected condition. Many have no numbers at all; some have rude attempts at names stuck at the heads, but the majority are evidently occupied by unknown and forgotten dead. Many loving hearts across the seas are perchance praying and waiting for the return of some who lie here in a pauper's grave. *Requiescat!* I waited for the funeral, which was to have been at the Cemetery at noon; but, as the gate-keeper said, "Hancox is never punctual." As the grave-digger went on with his work he threw up two heaps of dirt, one to fill up the grave, and the other to form a mound over the grave lying parallel. According to the Act of Parliament, there must be a space of three feet from the last coffin to the original surface of the ground; and if this is fully carried out, there can only be a mere layer of soil between the three coffins put in a

seven-foot grave ! I suppose all this has been well considered in its day ; but I cannot think it is a wise sanitary measure to crowd corpses together so near a city. There was a decidedly charnel-house smell in this quarter, which might have proceeded from the two unfilled graves, covered with wooden lids, which waited for further tenants.

Almost prostrated with the heat, I waited here amongst the dead, until at last the sound of slow wheels was heard on the gravel-path. The undertaker of the Alfred Hospital is himself like the figure of Death, and his appearance, driving a hearse, is horribly grotesque. On the box with him were a man and a boy, the husband and son of the deceased woman. They drove quietly up to the side of the grave, and, dismounting, the undertaker hailed the grave-digger, and with his assistance, lowered the coffin into its tenant's last resting-place. The mourners stolidly took a last look, a dozen shovels full of soil were thrown over it, and the thing was done. It was the most calm business arrangement possible. The hearse drove off, and I returned to my seat to wait for the clergyman. Broiling in the sun, I remained for more than an hour, and then I gave him up for that day and returned to the lodge. Here I found a number of cars, several private funerals having taken place in other parts of the grounds. A priest was coming towards the lodge, whom my gate-keeper friend pointed out as having been reading the service over the man buried that morning. I leave it to the Archbishop of Melbourne as to whether the directions of the Roman Catholic Church are carried out by thus performing offices three or four hours after the body was interred. My friend, too, thinking perhaps he had been too confiding in the morning, said, "The Protestant clergyman will be here at three o'clock to read over the bodies buried in the Church of

England ground." I was too fatigued to stay any longer, but determined to make further visits and see how the service was performed. As I left the Cemetery, I met a man with a little coffin under his arm, covered with a napkin ; it was his child's, which he had thus brought in a cab for economy's sake. A strange sight and a sad one. On the following Tuesday I was at the Cemetery at two o'clock in the afternoon, and again made my way to the "public ground" of the Church of England. A fresh row of graves had been begun, and the gravedigger was only two ahead, and was evidently working hard, so as not to be caught up. This was a different man to the one I had seen before. Aged, but hale, with a clear Saxon face and eye, and speech as of one born south of the Thames. I found that he was a Hampshire man. He was merry and cheerful ; not unfeeling, but custom had made his business "a property of easiness." We held improving converse together, which I worked round to the subject of funerals and the mode of performing the burial service. "There'd be no funeral to-day," he said, "but were some yesterday. 'The clergyman would most likely be round soon. I allays get him to read over all on 'em." "Did the clergyman come every day?" I asked. "Well, no—I can't say that he does every day ; but I make him read over all when he does come."

I waited an hour, dozing away the time on a seat hard by. It was after three when a mourning coach came down the path. Rising, I went towards the graves. "This ain't a hospital case, it's a private funeral ; that's one of Daley's cars," said the digger. A meek and careworn-looking woman stepped out of the coach ; after her, a little child. They were clad in old rustic black garments, apparently bought from a pawn or second-hand shop. They seemed as poor as could be, yet

this was no pauper's funeral, for the undertaker and Cemetery trustees had been paid. From the coach the driver produced a little coffin, and carried it towards the two open graves. The grave-digger jumped into one, and the coffin being handed to him, he stowed it away in a corner, and just covered it with a layer of soil. Standing above, the mother wept and sobbed, and the child looked down vaguely and curiously. With raised hat, "The Vagabond" completed the group. "Will the clergyman come?" asked the woman. "Oh! yes, he'll be here to-morrow," said the grave-digger. "What is it? A boy! All right, I'll see that he reads over it." "Thank you," said the woman, "I hope he will." Then, with one yearning glance backwards, she and the child entered the coach and drove away. I have seen and handled hundreds of bodies. Military funerals and public obsequies, with all the pomp of Church and State, are familiar to me. Death, in many forms, is an old friend of mine, so I do not affect any sentiment on these subjects. But this poor woman's case touched me. The hard business-way in which everything was done. The mother's hope that her child would "be read over;" her only surety for such being the goodwill of the grave-digger. The little coffin stowed away in a corner to await the arrival of other tenants. The sense that in death, as in life, the poor have not a square show for salvation—this affected me almost to the melting mood. Then, as is my custom, I got wrath. I myself care for none of these things. I know that no priest's paid prayers can influence my present or hereafter. We, who "try, prove, reject, prefer—still struggle to effect our warfare," stand and fall by ourselves. But thousands of good Christians, of all sects,



do believe in burial services for the dead ; the survivors find it a consolation in their grief, and even sceptics can scarcely hear unmoved the beautiful rites of the Church of England. This poor mother would, I believe, have had her grief half-healed if she had heard the prayers of the Church read over the little one. It is a scandalous outrage that the clergyman appointed, and who receives a fee for each case (paltry enough, no doubt), should not attend and perform the services over each. In "praying over a lot," he distinctly violates the ordered rites of burial as laid down in the Prayer Book. There it says: "The priests and clerks meeting the corpse at the entrance of the graveyard, and going before it, either into the church or towards the grave, shall say or sing." Then follow the texts appointed. After they come into the Church, the Psalm xxxix. (or xc.) is to be read ; then the lesson from Corinthians, describing the glories and mysteries of immortality ; after which, "when they come to the grave, while the corpse is made ready to be laid in the earth, the priests shall say" the appointed texts. "Then while the earth shall be cast upon the body by some standing by, the priest shall say:— 'Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of His great mercy, to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' &c. The present officiator at the Cemetery evades and burlesques the rites of his Church by praying, not only over many at a time, but long after they are interred. This might be so easily avoided by having all pauper and public funerals at a certain hour, when the clergyman might attend, and in a short time get through all his cases, and earn several 8s. without putting himself to much inconvenience. The Cemetery trustees should see to this,

and, if they are incompetent or unwilling, I recommend to the Church authorities that they investigate this frightful burlesque on the most solemn rite of the Church of England. It's a good thing that I did not see the clergyman on Tuesday, or I might have said something to him. I felt like it ; but after waiting till four o'clock I left, determined to return again on the morrow and see if any service would be read then.

I paid my third visit to the Cemetery on the next day at two o'clock. As I neared the old spot, I saw, coming down the opposite path, two women, dressed in black, accompanied by two boys, carrying a tiny coffin. My friend, the grave-digger, was on the look-out, and directed the little procession to the grave in which I had seen the other child buried the day before. The women were evidently mother and daughter, and both manifested great grief. Scraping away some soil, the coffin was deposited side by side with several others. The digger captured a harmless lizard in the grave, and threw it out. The boys immediately chased and destroyed it before I could stop them. "Is that your little brother?" I asked, intending to give them a homily on the love of life, and the sin of destroying anything harmless. "No, it's my sister's—her by the grave," was the reply. No wedding-ring was on her finger, but her young face was quiet and modest, and I believe she mourned as truly as if her offspring was the result of a priest-blessed union. "I thought the minister would be here," said the mother. "Oh, he'll come by-and-by, and I'll get him to read the service all right ; don't you be afraid of that," said the grave-digger, cheerfully. He had not finished his job before a covered waggon drove up, and a man lifted out a common wooden coffin, "blackened all over," which he informed us contained the body of the child murdered at

Emerald Hill. This was wedged in by the side of the other. Directly after this a coach drove up, there being this day quite a rush of business. Another small coffin was lifted out, with father, mother, and other mourners accompanying. These people wanted "the minister." They had been told he would be there. Acting on the advice of the grave-digger, the undertaker drove back to the lodge to fetch him, as he was told, "Else you won't get him for an hour or two, and perhaps not to-day." The coffin was placed by the side of the grave, and the mourners sat waiting under a neighbouring tree. I talked to the grave-digger as he went on with his work. After a time the coach was driven rapidly down the path, and the clergyman alighted. He was a very old and infirm man. Walking towards the grave he immediately proceeded to business, the mourners standing around, and the grave-digger, bare-headed, acting as clerk. The service was commenced with the text, "Man that is born of a woman," &c., and was hurried through, being recited in a maudlin voice, most painful to hear. In a side whisper the officiator asked, "Are there any more in?" And was told, "Some boys and girls." Then he prayed for "our dear brothers and sisters," lumping, at least, half-a-dozen together. In the next grave was the body of a man, which had lain there since Monday, but the clergyman did not perform any service over that, leaving it, as the grave-digger told me, "until it got full." The service was soon over, and the clergyman pocketed his 4s.—half-price for children—from the undertaker, and questioned the grave-digger as to the other interments, that he might look after his fees from the Government. It was altogether a great farce, and, as one of the men who came with the last funeral said, "I never saw anything like it in any part of the world; it's

disgraceful." It is either decent or Christian-like to perform the services of the Church over "our dear brothers and sisters here departed," or it is not. If it is of any avail, the poor should have a chance as well as the rich; at present it is a mere fluke whether a pauper is prayed over, and if so, it is with others he receives that benefit, and in a manner entirely opposed to the ritual of the Church, and disgusting to decent-minded people who, like myself, care little for religious observances.

From a correspondence which took place after the first publication of this article, I find that no provision is made for any religious service being performed over the bodies of those unfortunates who die in our hospitals and benevolent asylums. They are carted away and buried like dogs, perchance receiving the benefit of being prayed over with many others as "our dear brothers and sisters here departed." This is worse than in England. There the poor man who has toiled all his life, and found in age a refuge in the workhouse, being dead, at least has Christian burial. I believe this scandal has but to be pointed out to be rectified.

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### AT THE SAILORS' HOME.

THE traditional British sailor was a wonderful animal, full of strange oaths, welcoming danger in fight or storm; a lion at sea, and a lamb ashore. His hand was always in the pockets of his mysterious nether garments, scattering doubloons or crowns amongst his friends, and his arm was ever ready to defend a lovely woman in distress. This was the sailor of

Dibdin, T. P. Cooke, and Douglas Jerrold. I don't quite believe that he existed as a class. There may have been specimens, but they were as rare as the moa or the bunyip, and are now extinct. The British sailor of fact was, I believe, in most cases, a great ruffian, made so by the tyranny exercised on board all vessels—whether men-of-war or merchantmen. His life at sea was, in many cases, one of ill-usage and misery; he lived for long months in a floating prison, under strict restraints and unnatural privations, his existence burdened by the frightful scourge of scurvy. Sir James Graham was, I think, the Minister who preceded Mr. Ramsay in stopping private letters. The howl of indignation raised throughout England drove him from office; his sin was great, but is forgiven, for as author of the Merchant Seamen's Act of 1835, which compels owners to give a periodical supply of limejuice and vinegar to sailors kept on salt provisions, he prevented in the future much suffering and loss of life. We, now-a-days, can hardly recognize that, at times, the efficacy of the British fleet was imperilled by this scourge. So it was, however. Once, in 1780, after a cruise of ten weeks in the Bay of Biscay, Admiral Geary returned to Portsmouth with 2,500 men down with this scourge. Released, as it were, from a floating hell, there is little wonder that Jack ashore rushed into dissipation, and in a few days "knocked down" the earnings of months and years. But because he was a fool, he was not, therefore, an estimable individual. His orgies were like his tastes—low, brutal, and disgusting. He, it is true, spent his money freely amongst ruffianly companions, only because he did not recognize its value. As regards his chivalry, a lovely woman in distress could not find a worse protector than a half-drunken sailor. The true histories of the sea relate horrible tales of the outrages, murder, and rapine

committed by the chivalrous British sailor in the Spanish Main and peaceful islands of the Pacific. Go to, William and Tom Bowling ! As representatives of a class you are frauds, and never existed, save in the fertile brain of the song-writer.

*Vous avez changé tout cela*, so at least you say. Sailors, it is claimed, are now treated as rational beings, floggings on board men-of-war are of rare occurrence, good food for the body is served out as well as for the mind, and a large amount is annually saved by Her Majesty's Government through the falling-off in the consumption of rum, owing to the establishment of Good Templar lodges on board many of the ships. The merchant seaman is equally well treated at sea ; and ashore—instead of, as formerly, being at the mercy of the low boarding-house keeper and crimp, who, when he landed, kindly took care of his money, provided him with unlimited rum and tobacco, and in a week showed him a bill and kicked him "outward bound"—he goes to a Sailors' Home, attends a Bethel, temperance lodge, and Sunday-school, puts money in the savings' bank, and sings Moody and Sankey instead of Dibdin. The old idea of the British sailor is now thought to have been a disreputable one ; I question if the new one is more real. It is certain, however, that the British sailor has now far better aids provided to keep him straight and protect him from landsharks ; and of these, Sailors' Homes are claimed to be the chief. The first of these was established in Well-street, London, in 1830, and shortly afterwards Mr. Richard Green, the founder of the magnificent line trading to Melbourne, built one for the use of the men from his own ships. Then the magnificent building at Liverpool was erected ; and now Bristol, Portsmouth, Southampton, Cardiff, Newcastle, Sunderland, and most ports in England, have their Sailors' Homes. The good

effected by these has been so striking that, besides those in the Australian colonies, Sailors' Homes have been started in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kingston, Cape Town, and the Mauritius. The Melbourne Home was opened in 1865, being erected on a piece of land—granted, I believe, by the Government—opposite the Spencer-street railway station, and the cost of the building defrayed by Government grants and public subscriptions, the English shipowners and their agents giving largely. The Home rapidly became very popular, and has been largely patronized by seamen visiting this port, no less than 16,405 having passed through the Home as boarders during the ten years it has been in existence.

The other day I thought I would go to sea—at least, as far as the Sailors' Home ; so one afternoon a ragged, disreputable vagabond, in semi-nautical attire, was to be seen entering the gates of the institution. Spencer-street is not a lively locality, and the entire absence of nautical surroundings would lead one to imagine the building to be anything but what it is. The iron palings and shrubs in the front garden are not suggestive of the briny. On the right hand side of the hall is the superintendent's office, and, knocking humbly at the door, I was told to "come in," and found myself in the presence of the chief boss, John George Allbeury, ex-master mariner, and therefore always accosted with the brevet title of "Captain." This gentleman is a native of one of the Channel Islands, and looks like a Breton farmer. Cap in hand, I respectfully answered his queries as to whence I came, my last ship, why I left it, if I wanted another, and could I pay 19s. for a week's board? That sum being handed over, and my answers registered in a book, I was asked if I had any money to deposit. I had none, so

was confided to the care of a young man, a Swede, the "runner" of the establishment. Taking a key, he ushered me up stairs to the fourth story, and into a little room on the wing facing Little Collins-street. The rooms are 100 in number, and are situated on both sides of the passages on the different floors, from which and from each other they are separated by partitions of corrugated iron, thus saving space and providing cleanliness. There are low windows in each, looking into the streets or the inner yard, and over the door glass transoms admitting light at night from the gas-lit passages, no lights being allowed in the rooms. My room was perhaps 10 feet square, the only furniture being a low iron bedstead. The floor and walls were not very clean, dust and cobwebs being plentiful. I immediately examined my bed, and, finding dirty sheets, struck for and obtained clean ones, and was also promised a chair. Leaving my room, first locking the door, and pocketing the key, I went below and examined my "home." The shipping office was formerly located here, but has recently been removed to new quarters near the Custom-house. The front facing Spencer-street is now occupied by the office, store-room for luggage, and a day-room for inmates. This is furnished with tables and forms, and is a particularly dirty and dingy place. It is adorned with coloured prints of biblical events, such as David slaying a gigantic lion, the animal having his claws in David's arm in a manner which—in reality—would have prevented David hammering him with a club, as he is supposed to be doing. A print of the fight with the Spanish Armada is a little more appropriate. Over the fireplace is a notice that advance notes will be cashed "at the usual rate of 2s. in the pound," which to me seems rather extortionate. In this room inmates congregate and smoke, play cards and draughts; "no gambling,



however, being allowed." There is a spacious yard at the back, at the end of which is a good room devoted to skittles. Quoits are provided outside, and under the verandah there is a board containing a number of hooks, on which, from a certain distance, you pitch rings, or endeavour to do so. Altogether quite a fund of amusement. In this yard a number of inmates are always to be seen taking short quarter-deck walks to and fro. The force of habit is here strangely exemplified. Confined at sea, like beasts in cages, sailor constitutionals never exceed a certain number of paces each way, and on shore they cannot get rid of the habit. The dining-room is in the wing facing towards Little Collins-street, and is a large room, capable of accommodating 200. It is furnished with two long tables and forms, and over the fire-place is a marble tablet in honour of those good men and true, who, at the risk of their own lives, rescued the survivors of the screw steamer *Admella*, which, bound from Adelaide to Melbourne, was wrecked in August, 1859. The names of all the men are given in full, and perpetuated thus before the rising generation of seamen. This is an example to them to go and do likewise when need arises.

The regulations say :—"Breakfast will be ready at eight o'clock ; dinner, at one o'clock ; tea, at six o'clock ; and supper at ten o'clock. Each meal will be obtainable for one hour after the above stated times ; but, for the sake of the servants, the inmates are expected to come at the proper hours for meals." The boarders are generally on time at their meals. In the morning the bell rings at twenty minutes to eight, and few remain in bed after the breakfast hour ; and when the dining-room door is opened, there is always a rush for places. There is, however, a sort of grade even here ; mates, stewards,

and cooks generally taking, by custom, the upper end of the table, and ordinary seamen the lower. Breakfast consists of mutton chops, beefsteaks, and sausages (component parts unknown), tea or coffee, bread and butter. After my experiences at Kew, this was quite a liberal bill of fare, and everything was *ad lib.* But, alas! I have not acquired a taste for the *cuisine* of the fok'sle. The meat and sausages are all fried together, with a liberal allowance of onions, and served up on great dishes, without any pretence of distinction of viand. The consequence is, everything tastes of grease and onions. I object to both. Dinner consists alternately of soup and meat, or meat and "plum duff." The soup is not *À 1*; the meat is pretty fair, but the cookery, as I have suggested, decidedly of the fok'sle. Beef, mutton, sea-pie, and curry are brought in haphazard, and one generally seizes the first to hand. There are plenty of vegetables, and everything is served without stint. At dinner each man is allowed a glass of ale—colonial of course, but good of the class. The Good Templars of the crew hand their beer to their mates, and are consequently much respected for their temperance. For tea there is hash, stew, and cold meat, with coffee, tea, bread, butter, and salad. This was the meal I relished most. Supper consists of cold corned beef, bread, and cold water. I went in to look at this meal once, and shuddered to see men devouring piles of this indigestible food, washing it down with pure Yan Yean. I think the committee might allow tea and coffee, or a glass of ale, to each man at night. I could not help thinking of the experiences of a friend of mine who was running for Congress on the working-man's ticket in a district of Pennsylvania. He came to Philadelphia to orate at a "mass meeting," and a leader of the trades' unions asked him

to breakfast next morning. My friend consented, thinking it would be wise to propitiate, but with inward misgivings. It was a very cold morning in December. I had breakfasted quietly and well, and was smoking the post-prandial cigar in the hall of our hotel, when I saw a carriage rapidly drive up to the door, and my friend rushed in, pale as a ghost, his countenance expressing pain and horror, and one hand clutching his waistband. "What's the fuss, Colonel?" said I. "Brandy," he gasped, "brandy!" and, seizing me by the arm, he dragged me to the bar. There he took such a dose of Martell's '58—50 cents a drink—as considerably astonished the barman, who intimated that they kept open all day. Sinking on a seat, the Colonel said, "I live—but how I have suffered! It serves me right. I think I will retire to my native township, and become an honourable man, letting Congress slide. Anyway, I vow henceforth never to eat, drink, vote, or have anything to do with a working man, especially a Dutch working man." And then he told his ghastly tale. His host, it seems, was a German, and the breakfast consisted of a huge round of corned beef, a bowl of sauer-kraut, and a keg of lager beer. This on a morning when the thermometer was down to zero. The wretched man had to eat and drink of these, and submit for two hours to a cross-examination, and a repetition of his political creed to an admiring crowd of "popular" leaders. This saved my friend, however. He was disgusted, and retired to Chester County, and is now an honest country lawyer and farmer; whereas, if he had gone on his evil course to Congress, his career, morally, would have been a downward one.

I suppose the beds at the Sailors' Home would be luxurious to a "weary sea-boy;" for myself, I thought mine rather hard,

and could not sleep well. I was glad that it was winter, or I might have had companions. The lights in the day-room and passages are turned out at eleven o'clock, but when I retired at that hour I had little chance of rest. Boarders would come home at all hours, clattering along the passages—every sound reverberating along the iron walls. I found it very cold, too. I always opened the ventilator above the window, and the transom over the door; and, the bed-clothing being rather scanty, I often awoke shivering in the night, and wondering if this was the climate which, in England, I had heard spoken of as being so mild that people slept under gum-trees all the year round. Not much in Victoria, I think; at least, when they attempt to do it in the summer, they are brought before a magistrate and convicted “on the vag.” At the Home, the wind blows cold and dreary over the swamp, and in winter the outlook from my window is not a lively one. On each landing there are two open spaces in the passages acting as lavatories. A great blessing at all the public institutions of Melbourne is the bountiful supply of water. Soap here was procured from the steward who looked after the floor, each man having a piece given him for private use. I do wish they would also give them a towel each. The Benevolent Asylum is the only institution I have seen here where this great aid of cleanliness is understood. Here the towels are only changed once a week, and they are considerably, as may be imagined, soiled by use during that time. But, in any case, I object to have the chance of drying myself after a Chinaman or a negro; and I had to supply myself with relays of pocket-handkerchiefs for that purpose, being afraid to introduce a towel, as it might be thought too high-toned for a Vagabond. There is an attendant to each floor, the chief being a German named Joe, who spends many sixpences in the

Chinese lotteries, being on quite intimate terms with Little Bourke-street. The other two are quite boys. These, besides making the beds on their respective floors, are supposed to do all the cleaning, both up and down stairs, have to set the tables, and wait at meals. When the Home is full, these men have hard work, but are sometimes assisted by an inmate who may give a hand, getting in return some slight reduction in his board money. The whole establishment is worked economically ; besides the three stewards there being only two cooks, night watchman, runner, clerk, and superintendent on the staff. There is enough work for everybody—more than enough, perchance, and consequently a want of general cleanliness and attention to the comfort of the boarders.

Personally, I know little about Sailors' Homes in the old world, although I have seen the outside of the institutions at London and Liverpool. I landed at the latter port the night of the great fire at the Home in 1859, and got, I remember, considerably well drenched thereat. But the inmates of those institutions are, I believe, of all colours and nationalities, and a visit to them would afford far better opportunity for studying character than to the one here. We, however, are rather mixed. English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and colonials from all parts of Australasia, were mixed up with one Yankee, Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Greeks, a Malay, an American citizen of African descent, a pure negro, and the Chinaman who appears to be always with me. A black man sat next to me at table, greatly to the disgust of my Yankee friend, who said, "By —, sir, this is the first time I ever boarded with a nigger." I was interested, as he was of pure blood, and a study to me. I don't know whether it is to be put down to rum, civilization, or Christianity ; but, owing to some cause,

the pure negro is not to be found in the United States, and yearly the coloured folks appear to be getting lighter there. I have seen many little children running about in the South with blue eyes and golden hair, who, before the Civil War, would have been slaves. So I was interested in this pure "nigger," and found him a very quiet decent man. He was cook of a vessel, his race being always favourites in that capacity. The British sailor of old was certainly not to be found amongst this crowd. Both in manners, appearance, and dress they were very different to the popular notion of a sailor. The majority were men who sailed along the Australian coasts, making an occasional trip to India or the Pacific Islands. They were long-shore men, who could turn their hands to anything; who now go with horses to Calcutta, or as deck hands on river steamers, or take a turn in the bush at shearing or whatever came handy. The idea of the British tar on the wallaby seems a heresy, yet many of the men at the Home appeared, by their talk, experienced bushmen. In dress, the majority of inmates were attired like landmen, a few young mates appearing in blue suits and brass buttons. There was an extraordinary partiality displayed for woollen scarfs. The old idea of a sailor is a brawny-necked individual, whose chest and throat were always uncovered and exposed to the sun and wind. Each man here, however, seemed particularly anxious to muffle up his throat. I don't know whether this sort of amphibious life which many of them led made them better seamen; it is certain, however, it made them generally more intelligent. I had long conversations with some of these men. According to them, Melbourne, as a port, was getting nearly played out, and the number of sailors unemployed was instanced as a proof. When the wool season comes on some might get

a ship, but so many of the English liners ship their crews out and home, that there would not be a chance for all. If, too, they shipped to London at good wages, they would have to, in many cases, work their way back at the nominal pay of one shilling a month. "Adelaide's the place," said one man to me; "Melbourne's going to the dogs." "How do you make that out?" I asked. "Well, you see, they get no cargoes coming out here. What they do get they carry at such low rates that it don't pay 'em. Ships only come now for the wool. The customs is so high that it stops goods being sent out. Now, at Adelaide, they get good cargoes both ways. Every year you see more ships come in, and if they don't alter the customs here, Adelaide will get all the Riverina trade. When I once get away from here, I'll never come to this port again. Adelaide is the place for me." All the sailors I talked with were free-traders to a man.

The present seem, indeed, very hard times with the sailors in this port. The wages offered are very low, and it is only the existence of a Sailors' Union which keeps them at a minimum of £5 monthly for able-bodied seamen. I was myself offered £6 a month for a nine months' cruise, but I wanted £7. Every day the majority of the inmates of the Home go down to the shipping-office, around which they loaf, waiting for captains short of hands, who come not. Then they return to their meals; and on wet days lounge about the passages, play cards in the dayroom, or read in the library. This is a room on the first floor looking into Spencer-street—it is small and dirty. At one end are locked bookshelves, containing a good selection of popular works. On the tables are the daily papers and a fair supply of English illustrated and other periodicals. Books are given out from the shelves every morning. In this

room a certain number of inmates always congregate—they are generally of a superior grade. Here one or two daily bring their books and slates and work out problems in navigation, by those mysterious processes which enable nautical mathematicians to take a reckoning. They are studying to pass for first mates. There is an evening school at the institution, at which boarders are given instruction to enable them to pass either as second and first mates, or masters. It is a good thing that a man at sea should understand navigation, no matter what position he holds; but from Melbourne these students stand little chance of obtaining positions as officers, as the number of mates ashore is quite out of proportion to the seamen, or the demand for such. I am humorously told “the woods are full of mates; you find ’em on every bush here.” In the library, we, on wet days or at nights, gathered round the fire and exchanged experiences. I have in my time sailed on many waters and in many ships, and so I was quite at home. My Yankee friend had sailed on the Lakes, out of the port of Buffalo. Now, as I had myself been a voyage to Duluth, along those wonderful inland seas, we were at once on the same track. “Was it the Western Transportation Company you were with?” I was asked, and I admitted that I sailed in one of their boats. From thence our conversation led to sea and ships, till we struck mutual ground in recollections of the ill-fated *Virginus* and her commanders. This Yankee had come out here in a “lime juicer,” and his ideas of Australia were not very favourable. “I’m out of conceit with all of it,” said he; “we’d nothing but hunger, thirst, starvation, and poverty on the voyage. You’ll never get me in one of those cursed ships again.” A man who had been at Calcutta during the Prince of Wales’s visit gave us graphic accounts of the high jinks carried on amongst the



sailors in the fleet and the grand feed given to them. "You know the Budgeree Ghaut," said he to me. "Oh, certainly!" "Well, the tent was right from there. My eyes and limbs! it was a dinner! There was a bottle of ale to every man, and a pint of rum between two, and, after dinner, European ladies—real ladies, too—came around, and asked us which we'd have—'Cavendish or fine cut?'" This crowning joy overpowered us all, and we silently envied the man who had seen the Prince and been served to "fine cut" by European ladies. We had some very tough yarns, especially in the snake line. One man narrated how, off the coast of Africa, he and his mate bought three young boas for 10s. each, and kept them on deck in a tub, selling them, at Gravesend, to Jamrack's agent for £30. I have since repeated this story to a young friend of mine, who proposes joining me in the snake trade. Tales of Australian, Indian, African, and American snakes poured in from all sides, each one of us appearing at some time to have been in imminent deadly peril from such reptiles. I related my celebrated story of the snake which every morning waited for me as I took my ride; and, after making an ineffectual spring, retired into the bush until next day. One morning I was a little earlier than customary, and missed my friend. I felt rather vexed, as I had got used to the amusement; but shortly afterwards, at the bottom of a steep hill, looking round, I saw his snakeship, with his tail in his mouth, coming down the hill like a wheel. When he reached me he made the usual spring, and dodged the lash of the whip, and then returned homewards. I would not have killed that snake for anything, and I don't believe he would have injured me; and it is reputed that he sickened and died of grief when I left those parts. This truthful tale was very successful.

There was a young man at the Home studying to pass his examination as first mate. One day he showed me a certificate containing his name and the address of a little town, beautifully situated in a valley on the Welsh borders, where, years ago, I passed some happy days. It is one of those one-horse places where a decent stranger is looked upon as a welcome curiosity; and, if he is young and of a sociable disposition, soon gets to know the whole country side. At the subscription billiard-room I met every one, from the sporting attorney to the millionaire banker and ironmaster, whose works were on "the hills," fifteen miles away. Croquet and archery parties introduced me to the fair sex; and at the hunt-ball and races the notabilities of three counties assembled. I had forgotten all about this place and the people thereof, but this meeting with the young mate recalled many things to my memory. "Did you know the Blorenges, and the Sugarloaf, and Raglan Castle, and Llanover Priory?" "Yes, I knew them all." "And Sir Joseph Bailey, and the Hanbury Williamses?" "Yes." "And do you remember when young Reginald Herbert, of Clythia, was brought up in London, with a lot of officers and swells, for kicking up a row at Cremorne, after Ascot races, and they very nearly got six months each?" I had a vivid remembrance of this, through newspaper reports. "And did you know Mrs. —, of Abergavenny Castle; and do you remember the time she turned the garden-hose on the Ranters, who were preaching outside the castle walls, and set all her servants beating pans and kettles to drive them off?" Then my friend prattled on to reminiscences of "Mrs. Yelverton"—Therese, of that ilk, Viscountess Avonmore—who is sister of the eccentric lady mentioned above. I suppose I have a natural aptitude for "placing" persons and things. At all events, on this occasion, I told my

young friend all about the district, from the Lord Lieutenant's seat to the whisky-mill on Castle-green. He was astonished to find an American with such a knowledge of a remote English country town. Eyeing me suspiciously for a time, he at last said, "And you knew Evans's, the boot shop?" I admitted having laid out money there. "Did you know the young one who shook the till, and went to sea?" I was not so certain of this. My friend watched me carefully for two days, and then said, "It's no use. I'm sure you were born down there. You know more about the place than I do. I believe you're Evans." I laughed heartily at this, but the idea remained fixed, and the next day he said, "I say, Evans, what name do you go under now?" Thinking of the *nom de voyage* I had given Captain Allbeury, I was mightily amused at this query. Many people are concerned as to my identity: if they will go down to the Sailors' Home they will find an intelligent young man ready to testify that I am an absconding Welsh shoemaker. Rather rough this, even on a "Vagabond."

The managers of the Sailors' Home have, during the present winter, caused a series of popular entertainments to be given for the pleasure not only of their boarders, but of all seamen in the port. I was present at the fourth of these. It was a very fair show on the whole, although some of the amateurs were a great infliction. I do not know if all the performers were volunteers. Some of them I have seen before at that refuge for the destitute and school for rising talent, the Temperance Hall. The tables in the dining-room were cleared away directly after supper, and forms placed fronting a portable platform some six inches high. The Trades band, discoursing the music of "Madame Angôt," played in the company. The tables, piled at the end of the room, were

favourite seats, those on the highest tier being equivalent to the seats of the gods of a theatre. Mr. Hugh R. Reid was chairman, and introduced each performer with a few remarks. Much amusement was caused by his manner of describing several as having "come all the way from Sandridge or Williamstown." There was too much patronizing in this, and as regards some of the amateurs, we wished they would go back "all the way" home. The first gentleman attempted to give a song of the present degraded music-hall stamp. He had no voice and could not sing, his only qualification for the part being his looks, which were suggestive of the "Great Scamp," "Jolly Dod," or other professional *comiques* of renown. A comic song is always dreary, but when given by an amateur it is worse. We didn't care much about this, and the gentleman in question was such a muff, that a seaman next to me threatened to throw something at him if he came out again. Another said, truly, "It's a ——— insult that chap getting up, and can't sing a bit. I suppose he thinks anything good enough for sailors." The next performer was introduced as "having left his work, and his books, and his papers, and come all the way from Sandridge to sing here to-night." "What the ——— does he do working at night?" growled one. However, this gentleman gave us the "White Squall" in a style which brought down the house. We sailors appreciate good music, and especially nautical ballads. Mr. ——— is a young gentleman with histrionic proclivities. He gave us the dialogue between Bumble and Mrs. Corney, from *Oliver Twist*, in a manner which agreeably surprised me. The sailors enjoyed this hugely, and encored Mr. ———, who was not quite so successful in his rendering of "Fagin's Dream," which is not a pleasing subject, and which Charles Dickens himself

had great difficulty in rendering palatable to an audience. The success of the evening was Mr. W. S. Gilbert's amusing "Bab" ballad, "The Nancy Belle," which Mr. — gave with great unction. One of our number, who had been communing with the spirits, was particularly noisy in his repetition of the chorus "Brave Boys." Another, however, suddenly left us when the song arrived at the stage where the crew cast lots as to who shall be killed. I met this man next day, and said, "Mate, what was the matter with you, last night, that you went off in that way?" "It's all — fine to make a joke of it, but if you had been in that fix yourself you wouldn't care 'bout hearing the like made a song of," was his reply. I whistled, and felt inclined to ask him what it was like, but he stalked off moodily, not inviting interrogation. A man who has eaten his fellow-man is an object of interest to me. He doubtless has feelings and sensations which I do not understand. Messrs. — were very successful in the gendarmes' duet, from "Genevieve de Brabant;" but the crowning joy was "The Death of Nelson," by Mr. — the gentleman who had "come all the way from Sandridge." "God save the Queen," and cheers for Captain Allbeury and others, finished the show, and we retired quietly and without disturbance. These entertainments are very good things, and the ladies and gentlemen who give their services gratuitously deserve thanks: still the line should be drawn somewhere, and because one is not paid, that is no reason the audience should be grateful for being punished by listening to atrocious comic songs.

I was sitting one night in the library, hearkening to some harrowing tales of the sea, when the sound of music and singing arose from below. A rich strong soprano voice was

delivering "Hold the fort, for I am coming," one of the gems of the collection of Messrs. Moody and Sankey. I don't know that I bet my bottom dollar on these gentlemen. Mr. Moody I knew before he went to England, and remember the time when he could not draw a house. Strange that so few are prophets in their own countries, but have to receive the stamp of foreign approval before their merits are acknowledged at home. At the time Messrs. Moody and Sankey were "reviving" all London, Mr. Varley, "The Notting-hill Butcher," certainly known only to a few in England, was drawing crowds to Barnum's Hippodrome in New York, and was, according to the religious press, a shining light, doing a great work. Messrs. Moody and Sankey, having converted all England, are now received with open arms in their native land. I cannot say, however, that Mr. Varley has had any great success on his return to London. The profane say that Mr. Sankey and his singing is the attraction, and that Mr. Moody's preaching is, as it were, only "a side show." It is certain that their songs are very taking, and they "fetched" me on this occasion. Going down to the dining-hall, I found that it was doing duty as a chapel. The congregation, however, was a small one, not twenty sailors being present. At a harmonium a lady was seated, playing and singing in a style which, after my experiences of the religious entertainments provided at the Benevolent Asylum and at Kew, was most gratifying and pleasing. The service was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Johnston, of the Seamen's Bethel at Sandridge, an institution which I hope some day to visit. The lady musician was his daughter. The small congregation was a very attentive one, and was composed of some of the best men in the Home, the presence of Captain Allbeury not

being needed to keep them in order. Mr. Johnston did not bore us ; after two hymns, he gave a short prayer, then a portion of Scripture, then a short homely address, a prayer and hymn concluding the service. But the sailors wanted another tune, and they had two. As with Messrs. Moody and Sankey, the singing here is the great attraction. Mr. Johnston's service was a good one, and his words seemed eminently fitted for the occasion. If any men in the world want religion, both as regards their present manners, words, and customs, and their future life, sailors do. In my career I have only met one religious seaman. He hailed from Cape Cod, was an abolitionist, and hated a Southerner with a holy hatred. But he was a real out-and-out truly religious man, for whom I had a great respect. I don't count those firemen on board the steamers between Glasgow and Oban, with whom I made acquaintance on a certain voyage some years ago, as religious men, although they were great hands at praying. It was frightful weather—wind and current were against us, and we were rapidly drifting on a lee shore. I was the only passenger on board, and the skipper's heart was warm towards me from my having known the ship in which his brother sailed under the American flag. I was on deck, drenched to the skin, looking at the grey line of coast, which occasionally loomed up threateningly through the mist, when the skipper came aft with the engineer. "The Ramsay mon and myself are going to have one last glass, come and join us?" I did. We had several last glasses, and Ramsay and the old man shook hands many times, and left all their property to each other. I had no one to appoint my residuary legatee, but began to realize the philosophy of sailors breaking into the spirit-room during a wreck and dying drunk.

The unco guid may hold up their hands and cry "shocking!"

but the above story is absolutely true, and quoted as appertaining to the subject in hand. The captain had made up his mind that it was all over with us, yet quietly sat drinking whisky as we drifted to our doom. I can't tell what his thoughts were—mine were considerably mixed. The alcohol elated me, but the waiting for the end was frightful, and I began to feel a desire to jump overboard. At last, I persuaded my companions to come on deck. The weather had cleared up, but we were very close to the land, on which we were drifting, the paddles scarcely revolving in the water. "Ramsay, mon!" cried the captain, "ye've let the fires down." The engineer, who was rather fou', darted down to the engine-room, and came up again directly with the intelligence that all the hands had struck and were praying. "What, praying!" said the captain. "I'll give them praying—I'll beat the prayers out of every mother's son of them!" and he went into his cabin and brought out two big sticks. "Now, Ramsay," said he, here's one for you; and you, mon, come along with that revolver of yours, and shoot any — that mutinies; kill him dead, will you?" "I will," said I, and down the engine-room we went. As Ramsay had said, half-a-dozen men were kneeling down in front of the fires, praying and shivering. The old man let out a string of oaths. "Fire up, there," he cried, and he and Ramsay laid about them manfully. Only one man resisted, and the sight of my pistol, a persuasive agent which the ordinary Britisher is not accustomed to, brought him to his bearings. Remembering my Mississippi experiences, I asked if there was any bacon in the cargo; and the skipper broke bulk. Flitches of bacon were thrown on the fires, the men kept working like negro slaves, with Ramsay and myself standing over them, the old man dividing his time between the deck and the



engine-room, encouraging the men by oaths and blows. For hours the gallant little craft fought death for us, but at last we conquered, and, rounding a headland, found plenty of sea-room. Now, whether the whisky, which incited our trio to these extreme measures, saved us or not, I can't say; but one thing is certain, the praying would have wrecked us. So I do not reckon those men as truly religious. Better to meet death working. But Mr. Johnston's preaching at the Sailors' Home inculcated the practical Christianity of a good life and good work, and I was very pleased thereat. I must confess that I listened to it through the window, standing afar off like the sinner that I am. Afterwards, however, Mr. Johnston came and spoke to me in the hall. I was very much afraid that he was about attempting converting me, but his conversation was on ordinary matters—my material welfare—he manifesting a kindly interest in every inmate of the Home, looking on them apparently as something more than souls to be prayed at. I liked the homely practical way in which Mr. and Miss Johnston talked to the men, who generally seemed to respect them. There was one "hard case," however, a man who had been continually drinking, who was deaf to the advice given him to take the pledge—Mr. Johnston, I believe, being a shining light in the temperance cause.

In spite of Good Templar Lodges, Rechabite and Total Abstinence Societies, and Sailors' Homes, strong drink is the rock on which many a seaman is still wrecked. Certainly, the majority of the inmates of the Sailors' Home were sober men, and the amount of drinking done at the neighbouring public-houses was small. Still a few made good time, and one man lost his ship through over-indulgence in colonial poison. He had been in the Home some time, and left one morning for

his new ship at Sandridge pier, wishing us all good-bye in an elated manner, and envied by many. Two days afterwards we were surprised to see him walk in, looking ill, and with scars of combat on his face. It was the old story of folly and bad drink. He had obtained an advance, and, meeting a friend at Sandridge, felt bound to treat him. Queensland rum soon did its work, and Jack was shortly staggering on to the pier, where he met his captain, who told him that he didn't want any drunken men on board. Jack retorted, and struck at the captain, who knocked him down, and gave him in charge of the police. After being locked up all night, he luckily escaped with twenty-four hours' imprisonment. The naïve manner in which this man related his adventure was very amusing. He seemed to think that he had been hardly treated by the skipper. "What did he want to bother me for when I was drunk?" he said. "I didn't know what I was doing, and if I did strike him I would have made an apology to him afterwards, if he would only have let me go on board." However, while sympathizing with him, we generally agreed that he was a fool, as ships were not to be had every day during these hard times. Three men, who left a well-known liner because, as they assured me, she leaked so much they did not care about going round the Horn in her, were, however, lucky in obtaining berths in the Lincolnshire, but I expect they shipped home at low wages. Four men had their passages paid to Launceston to fill up the crew of a vessel there; in fact, from what I could glean, every port in the colonies seemed at this time better than Melbourne for a sailor. Whether the evil of centralization of labour, which is apparent in the trades here, also applies to sailors, I cannot say; but the supply of seamen, anyhow at present, far exceeds the demand, and the wages

offered are, as a rule, very low. The foreigners of our crew generally shipped at these low wages ; the only instance which came under my notice of a fair rate being given was on a ship bound for an indefinite time to Malden Island for guano. This is a cheerful spot, near the equator. If Dante had ever been there, he would certainly have added an extra circle—a guano one—to his list of torments. A man who knew the place, said he would not go there for £50 a month. Owing to having been so long ashore, we were mostly impecunious, which may have accounted, in a degree, for our general quietness. Many were stopping on credit, and would repay what they owed out of their advance, or when they returned from their cruise. This is one great advantage of the Sailors' Home, that when "all Jack's money is gone and spent," he is not kicked out, as he would be at a common boarding-house. Men who trade along the coast, and are regular *habitués*, are freely trusted, and, to Jack's honour be it said that he generally pays. In the last report £304 is stated to be owing by seamen, of which £96 is returned as bad and doubtful—a very small percentage on the business done by the Home since its establishment ; but during the year an amount of £357 was received, previously owing by seamen, of which £42 had been considered bad. This speaks very well for Jack's honesty and for Captain Allbeury's vigilance in looking up debtors to the institution.

The recent mutinies and murders on board the *Caswell* and *Lennie* must have given the public a general bad opinion of the British merchant seaman. But, in these cases, the outrages were committed by foreigners, Greeks being the ringleaders. Now, I detest the modern Greek as much as I believe in the ancient, having early acquired a prejudice against the race from having been held down by a fellow-student with a dagger at my

throat. Another minute and I should never have written these lines ; and many estimable gentlemen in Victoria, I am sure, would have rejoiced thereat. My antagonist was a great prince in his own country, with the blood of a million kings and heroes in his veins ; still, a vicious little scoundrel. Ever since, I have been prepared to believe any evil of the ordinary Hellene. But even in this case of the Caswell, some of my mates in the Home drew attention to the strange fact that the murdered skipper shipped an entirely new crew in South America, including the brave man who so successfully brought her safe to port. The original crew had left the ship discontented, and they argue that he must have been harsh or brutal. Their theory is, that no mutiny takes place until the crew are thoroughly exasperated by ill-usage, and then only foreigners accustomed to use the knife will break out, the British sailor taking his share of pandemonium without overt action. The stories of mutinies and outrages at sea do not quite bear out this idea. I am afraid the British sailor has his share of bloodshed to answer for. But I think there is a good deal in the assertion that, unless provoked and rendered reckless by extra ill-usage, sailors will not mutiny. The authority with which a captain lords it over his crew is so boundless and so palpable, that every sailor has an awe of the same ; and the penalties inflicted on mutineers are so severe that a skipper, as a rule, must exasperate and make his men desperate before they will attempt to brave the one and dare the other. According to the stories told me at the Home, many ships at the present time are still floating hells. I heard tales of the brutality of captains which made my blood run cold, and which, as they did not appear to arouse any surprise amongst the audience, and as I have myself seen cases of such, —I had hoped exceptional—I believe to be true. There is a

master sailing somewhere about the ocean, who rejoices in the appellation of "Bully" Hay ; I don't know him, but may meet him some day, and he may be interested to know that according to general report he is as great a ruffian as ever trod a plank.

The "old school" of merchant officers, as well as the traditionary sailor, were nice companions. I have known such, some even now trade to this port. Ashore they are as nice men as can be ; and on board, to their passengers, they affect the jolly sailor to hide their brutality. They drink freely with the gentlemen, being seasoned vessels, and not easily overthrown. Their coarse familiarity with ladies is put down to a sailor's bluntness, and much is forgiven to them ; any officer on board ship being looked up to by the female mind as a superior being. When the ship gets to port, a purse of sovereigns and an address will be presented to the gallant skipper for having been lucky enough to avoid running on a rock, when most possibly his officers have done all the work. But this man, in connexion with his crew, and all whom he can bully, is a brutal tyrant, whom in no other situation in life would a lady or gentleman notice. I trust these are exceptional cases, and they are only to be found in a few sailing vessels ; the officers on ocean steamers being in most instances thorough seamen and gentlemen—the type of the new school *versus* the old salt. I am not pretending that the British sailor of to-day is a superior being, if not such a brute as his predecessor. I think that, owing to many causes, he may have slightly degenerated as a sailor ; but I believe that the hard life he must always lead, and bad treatment that he in many cases receives, has a great deal to do with his low *morale*. If sailors have prejudices against their officers, and relate stories

of ill-usage, it is no less true that many who know them best have a very bad opinion of them. A gentleman who knows as much about seamen as anyone in Victoria assures me that "five years in the fok'sle will take all the good out of a man, if he ever had any in him, and will make a brute and ruffian of him." Officers, too, have not a good word for the ordinary A.B. I was once walking in front of the Home when a young mate asked me to drink. "When a man says wine, straight I drain the flagon;" so I made a move towards the corner "pub." "Not there," said my friend, "don't you see those sailors there? I'm surprised at you, who seem to be a pretty decent man, talking or having anything to do with them. You know they'd sell either of our lives on board ship." I was very sorry to hear this; with such a feeling between officers and crew, no wonder that sometimes anger and malice are engendered, and mutiny and murders occur. But Captain Allbeury, at least, has not such a bad opinion of the sailor. His children play around with the inmates, and are a source of great joy and amusement to them. A sailor, who so seldom has a home and family of his own, loves children with a womanly fondness. The whole connexion between Captain Allbeury and the inmates is that of a kind-hearted skipper and his crew, and I do not think anyone could be more popular with them than he is. I believe that he has the good of the institution and of the inmates at heart. For myself, I can say I was well treated, and the captain and Mr. Barras, the clerk, kindly took an interest in getting me a ship.

No inmate of the Home seemed thoroughly to understand the exact nature of the institution. Some said it was a private speculation, and that the proprietors were making a good thing out of it; others, that it was a Government concern, and that

the managers were bound to take in and provide for all shipwrecked sailors. I have since procured the last report of the managing committee, which is one of the most abstruse documents I ever perused—the work of a sailor apparently, with little knowledge of law. I am especially struck with the “Laws of the Melbourne Sailors’ Home,” which certainly want revising, being very misty at present. I find that the Governor and the Commissioner of Trade and Customs for the time being are to be respectively patron and president, and *ex officio* members of the committee. Further, that “the management of the institution shall be entrusted to a committee of fifteen members, exclusive of *ex officio* members, five to retire annually, being eligible for re-election.” The laws do not clearly state how the committee is to be elected, but presumably it is by the members at a general meeting. The committee has power “to appoint five trustees, to whom all the landed and other property that may be acquired by the institution shall be conveyed in trust, &c. Any vacancies occurring in the number of the trustees to be filled up at their meeting next ensuing.” That is, the trustees form a self-perpetuating and irresponsible body, which I hold it is highly undesirable to connect with any public institution. I read that general meetings of the members shall be held at such times as the committee shall determine, and special meetings on receiving a requisition signed by not less than *thirty members*. The members are subscribers of not less than one guinea annually and donors of not less than £25, the latter life members. On turning to the list of subscribers to ascertain the number of members, I find that, in Victoria, according to the above conditions, there are only about twenty members, these being for life, as last year there were no subscribers. I question if the majority of these members, who donated largely at the begin-

ning, take any interest or part in the present working of the Home; and I presume everything is left to the committee. It is an extraordinary thing that, after the "laws" decisively say that there shall be fifteen members, there are at present only fourteen on the committee. Of these all are not qualified by their donations to life membership. I fully acknowledge the vicious method of looking at a man's interest in any institution and capability for managing same by the money he gives, but it is here made the test of membership. In this instance, as in all the semi-public institutions I have visited, I find a committee which is practically irresponsible having the control of a large amount of public money. The subscriptions from 1862 to 1875 were £12,279, but of this £6,150 had been granted by Government in various sums. The Duke of Edinburgh gave £100, and the ball held on the occasion of his visit realized £960. The balance of the "Admella" fund handed to the committee was £470, and the trustees of the "Taranaki Relief Fund" gave £721, on condition of 8 per cent. of that amount being annually devoted to the relief of distressed seamen. The large sums given by English shipowners and collected on board the mail steamers being added to the foregoing amounts, leaves a small sum to be represented by the members or committee.

I am not saying one word against the present administration, either trustees or members of committee. The gentlemen who devote their time to attendance at the board meetings are, I believe, earnest in the work. They are all of them representative men, with large interests in the shipping of this port—the very men for the positions they hold at the Home. But in course of time the constitution of the committee must alter, and who knows what may happen, or what hands the Home may fall into. Sir Charles Dilke's recent exposure of chari-



table corporations in the House of Commons shows how irresponsibility may degenerate through ages into abuse and corruption. The first managers may have been zealous and efficient, but they die off, or become careless, some sharp rogue seizes the chance, and, with his creatures, assumes control of everything; they are responsible to no one, and abuse their supposed trusts. Or a well-meaning, but foolish man, may push himself to the head of affairs, the result being equally lamentable. It is true that, now the Government grant is withdrawn from the Sailors' Home, it being quite self-supporting, indeed working at a profit—last year the amount paid for board being £3,292, and cost for maintenance, including all salaries, only £2,771. But this building was erected by the public money for the sailors' benefit, and the trustees and committee should be responsible to some one. As the Home is so largely supported by the seamen sailing around the coast, I think they should be represented on the committee, and have a voice in the management. As it is, trusting to its presumed public character, they deposit large sums in the office, the amount now on hand being £1,132; and, since the establishment of the Home, over £42,000 has been so received. This, I suppose, is placed where it will do most good in the way of bringing in interest; but I really think Jack, who now supports the Sailors' Home, should have some sort of voice in the management of his quarters and funds.

The report of the Sailors' Home draws attention to "the desirability of organizing a society for affording relief to sufferers by shipwreck," and the committee having taken action in the matter, a meeting was held, a "Shipwrecked Mariners' Society" formed, and a concert given at the Town Hall to start a fund for same. The promoters of this society are all of them, I

believe, connected with the management of the Sailors' Home. According to the reports, however, this is to be an entirely separate undertaking, and I cannot see the necessity for that. Multiplication of charitable institutions is an evil existing in most large cities in the world, which is being faithfully copied in Melbourne. No matter how economically they may be managed, there is sure to be extra expense, which an amalgamation of many would save. The only result achieved by separate charities is the formation of honorary offices, affording idle or philanthropic gentlemen an opportunity for displaying their abilities for organization or mismanagement. The Sailors' Home is already in possession of a small fund for the relief of shipwrecked and distressed seamen, and last year there was also a balance in hand of £458, a profit made on the maintenance of the boarders. Now if the popularity of, and business done at, the Sailors' Home goes on in like manner—and there is no reason that it should not, for many private individuals would be glad to take the institution, paying a good rental, and then work it at a profit—there will yearly be a balance on the credit side, even if a small one. Any sum made out of sailors should be utilized for the relief of shipwrecked mariners ; and seldom, I hope, will the call be so urgent but that the funds on hand will be able to satisfy the same ; but in such case any public appeal from the committee of the Sailors' Home would, I am sure, be at once liberally responded to by the public of Victoria. Until such a necessity arises, however, I do not see any *raison d'être* for a separate society being formed, or for funds being collected and hoarded up, whilst this—a semi-charitable public institution—is being worked at a profit. Let the relief of shipwrecked mariners be within the scope of the Sailors' Home : let them be relieved

there to the extent of the ability of the management ; and whatsoever they spend more, I am assured, would not be lost to them, but would be amply repaid by the generous-hearted people of this colony. The columns of *The Argus* daily testify what is done in like manner, without the expense and red-tapeism inculcated by too many societies. Sailors, also, who frequent the Home, would be more satisfied if they knew that any profit made out of them would be divided amongst their shipwrecked fellows. As it is, no such arrangement is in force, the crew of the recently wrecked Queensland having to camp in Little Bourke-street, and the subscriptions raised for them not being of immediate benefit. It is true that Captain Allbeury says, if they had come to the Home, he would have taken them in ; but as they were mostly Malays and Chinese, he was very glad to be relieved of the task. I would, however, give any shipwrecked sailors a right to go to the Home, where their immediate necessities should be relieved, and subscriptions received on their behalf divided, without there being a necessity for any other organization or management than the present.

This article was in type when the news arrived of the wreck of the ill-fated Dandenong and the sad loss of life. But we also heard of the gallant conduct of the captain of the *Albert William*, which rescued the survivors, and of the heroism of the "boat's crew of the Dandenong." May they be for ever famous ! Amongst the lost was, alas ! an old chum of mine at the Sailors' Home—he whom I refer to as my Yankee friend. He was *en voyage* to Newcastle, to become chief officer of a ship there, when he met his doom, bravely sticking to the vessel, although only a passenger. May he and all other gallant sailors who thus perish rest in peace beneath the waves !

## IN A FASHIONABLE CHURCH.

I CERTAINLY had no business here. A vagabond in a fashionable church is decidedly out of place, and his presence is more surprising than that of flies in amber. Such as myself are "neither rich nor rare," but the wonder to many, I am told, is how I find my way into the places of which I write. From a social stand-point it is a far cry from the Gospel-hall to the Scots Church in Collins-street. Nevertheless, on Whit Sunday, I attended service at the latter, and now have the audacity to give my views thereon.

Although the edifice is a new one, the church (using that word to denote the body of worshippers) is one of the oldest in Victoria. The building itself is a fine specimen of architecture—worthy of a great city like Melbourne. Inside, there is no "dim religious light;" no painted windows\* keep out God's sun, or convey holy lessons by the representation of pre-Raphaelite figures of saints of dubious identity; there are no obscure aisles, sanctuaries, or altars which imagination may endow with an extra amount of sacredness or mystery. Everything here is cold, severe, chaste, and beautiful; there is a free light everywhere—the building is typical of the doctrines preached, which require no supernatural embellishments or material appeals to the senses, but are open to and court the full light of reason. I had shed for the nonce my vagabond

\* Since this was written I have been informed that the windows are ultimately all to be of stained glass, the gifts of different wealthy members of the congregation. Indeed, within the last few weeks, the large window facing Collins-street has been fitted with stained glass, at the expense of Sir Samuel Wilson, M.L.C.

apparel, and being clothed in the garments of civilization and church-going, no obstacle was offered to my entry. I arrived full early, and had ample time to observe the congregation. The beauty, fashion, wealth, and talent of Melbourne is strongly represented here. The daughters of the land are in great force—could any church exist for a year without female support? For them the denizens of land, sea, and air have been slaughtered to furnish fitting attire for worship, and they wear a fortune in golden ornaments and precious stones. The civilized man, in direct opposition to the course of nature—as witnessed in the animal kingdom or savage man—wears a sober apparel, and leaves the beauties of colour to his mate; but some here present restore the balance of value by the extra size of their diamond rings. It is a moot point as to whether one should dress plainly for church-going. Cynics say, “If God cares about you, He won’t look at your dress or coat, but at your heart.” That is true; but then, why should we pay less respect to the worship of God than to our own friends? You would not insult your host by going to dinner in a stuff gown or in a shooting-jacket; and so long, therefore, as dress is considered a mode of expressing reverence, I am not going to quarrel with ladies for adorning themselves for church-going. And in this moderation I lose a fine opportunity of inveighing against feminine vanities, and the incongruity of much of the service with the position and attire of the female congregation. But although a vagabond, I strive to be impartial, and I think many writers have criticised too much “the fair sinners in satins, laces, and diamonds.” Outwardly and artistically, the males here may not be much to look at, but they represent a great deal. This is a truly remarkable congregation, and chiefly so for the individual and aggregate

wealth of its members. Here are men whose yearly income is reckoned by the thousand, up to hundreds of thousands: squatters, whose flocks and herds are greater than those of Abraham; merchants, bankers, and lawyers, men of the first repute on the mart and in the forum. No incongruity is apparently perceived in the presence of a sporting element in the congregation. Could some modern outcast Samson pull down the pillars, I expect the amount of succession and legacy duties would free the Government from the necessity of collecting taxes for a year or two.

It is pleasant to be in such company, pleasant to look around and see fair, cultivated women, pleasant to feel the subtle perfumes which float through the air. Whatever is—is (whether it is right or fair, is another question). So I, although my feelings and prejudices are enlisted on behalf of the poor and outcast, cannot deny to myself that this clean, well-dressed congregation is likely to be morally better than those who should fill the Gospel Halls—but don't. In the surroundings here there is everything in the favour of morality and respectability. Leaving the religious question on one side, one feels that here everyone is likely to acknowledge an obligation to his neighbour—that received social morality which John Stuart Mill well defines as being in truth “the summary of the conduct which every one, whether he himself observes it with any strictness or not, desires that others should observe towards him.” And I can readily imagine that this feeling may be increased and sustained by a superior social position, and advantages mental and physical. Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, the author-artist, says, in the *Intellectual Life*—“There is really in nature such a thing as high life. There is really in nature a difference between the life of a gentleman who has culture, and

fine bodily health, and independence, and the life of a Sheffield dry-grinder, who cannot have any one of these three things. A life of health, of sound morality, of disinterested intellectual activity, of freedom from petty cares, is higher than a life of disease, and vice, and stupidity, and sordid anxiety." The present Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, writing of his friend, the late Julian Fane, refers to his "artistry of life" as represented not only by his intellectual but by his bodily gifts. Now, without allowing that the advantages which Mr. Hamerton and Lord Lytton refer to are always accompanied by a sound morality in their possessor, still they must be a great incentive thereto. But all these advantages are dependent upon the possession of comparative wealth; and the poor man has a double ground of complaint—first, in his present state being one of disease, care, and hard work; and, secondly, in his surroundings leading him into vice and crime, and so endangering his immortal welfare. I really feel that, now-a-days (if he will), it is easy for a rich man to be moral and religious, and so become worthy of the kingdom of heaven. I have known how hard it is to feel your equals turn from your shabby coat, to fare meanly, and endeavour to keep up the feelings of an honourable man, and to resist the promptings of evil, which would lead one to do things which hereafter you might be ashamed of. If I have conquered temptations, and can feel that morally I am not much below the average church-goer, it is because years of social training and advantages in the past taught me that vice and crime are not beautiful, and in the end don't pay; and that not only in the next world, but in this, virtue, if it can rise above the slough of poverty has its reward. But I can fully realize how, to the poor and ignorant, temptations which those more fortunately situated can throw off without effort, come with overpowering

force. There is nothing in their lives, or associations, or tone of their public opinion, to aid them in resisting such—the influence, in fact, is the other way. I am obliged to admit the superior morality of this congregation, but how their position is to be reconciled by any “scheme of existence or salvation” with those of the vagabonds and outcasts from whom I hold a brief, I do not know.

In the old country I have studied all the vagaries of the Church of England—High, Low, and Broad. Sometimes, where the Church was least apparent, I fancy I detected the most Christianity. But I confess I know little of Presbyterian doctrines. Occasionally there is an advantage in approaching a subject without previous knowledge. A thing strikes a stranger with freshness, and often begets ideas which would not occur to those to whom the topic is familiar. I suppose we had the orthodox service of prayers, readings, and hymns. It being the occasion of the periodical communion, the portions of Scripture which were read referred to the institution of that sacrament. The singing, in which I was glad to hear the congregation join, was good, and the organ was an excellent one. The prayer was not a long one ; it was full of the ordinary appeals to the Almighty for help and protection for ourselves and others, but couched in moderate language. After the giving out of the text we carefully settled down in our seats, which were not too comfortable, and observed the minister. The Rev. Charles Strong was selected and sent out here by Principal Caird as the best available article in that line in Scotland. He is a young man, not much over thirty, but looking his full years. There is nothing particularly striking in his personal appearance, which is not set off by the grim Geneva gown of orthodoxy. From the chaste white stone pulpit (which occupies the place



of the altar in other churches) his voice was clearly heard. But his reading of the sermon could not be called eloquent, and, to my mind at least, his manner was decidedly not "inspiring." There was a harshness and dryness of delivery, which I daresay, after the first hearing, you get accustomed to. But the matter of the sermon was everything. Taking his text from the lesson, he discoursed on the communion. He showed that it was a rite of the church, one of those grafted from the Jewish on to the Christian faith. But in partaking of this sacrament we did not believe in any supernatural characteristics, or that there was anything particularly sacred or priestly in the administering of the same. We did not believe in any ritualism ; and by that he meant not only the functions of the Catholic and Anglican Churches, but that worship of or veneration for forms which might and did exist in many Presbyterian country churches. We believed that there was nothing specially sacred in the form or material of any service, in the officiator, or the place in which it was held ; but so long as men believed that an immaterial soul, without form or substance, would go to a very material hell, so long the belief in the efficacy of material rites and ceremonies would exist. All these, although now so thoroughly grafted into the doctrines of churches, were at first merely adopted from motives of expediency. We might look upon many of these observances as childish, but still, there was nothing particularly wrong in them ; and perhaps they had in past times been necessary. We must look at, and partake of the sacrament in a spiritual light. The love of Christ, and of a Christian life, should be in our hearts, and recognizing one broad universal spirit in the other churches of the past and the present, we may see through petty forms, rites, and ceremonies the Spirit of Christ. With His love in our hearts we should

strive after purity of life, and endeavour to do Christian works, helping to make a Christian city and a Christian congregation, and not leave this only a weekly "religious meeting-house or Gospel shop," where praying and preaching might be heard, but no fruit come thereof.

These were the principal heads of Mr. Strong's discourse, and fairly embody, I believe, his views on the necessity of a purity of life and good works. He is evidently no believer in the efficacy of faith, and in every idea is far in advance of the traditions of the Presbyterian Church and the majority of its ministers. The "Holy Church Universal" is to him composed of all who believe in the principles of a Christian life, no matter how they call their belief. In rites and ceremonies he sees childish aids to religion for those who have not arrived at a stage in which they can do without these. *Mirabile dictu*, he does not denounce others for believing in superstitions, but underneath these sees the Spirit of Christ, and detects love where others would only find hatred. For such a congregation as Mr. Strong possesses, I hold his views to be admirable—for myself, I desire no other; but for the majority of mankind—for the poor, the vicious, and the criminal—how will this intellectual-spiritual religion affect them? Can you appeal to their hearts through their reason, or must they not be influenced by rites and teachings which claim some sort of present supernatural authority, as in the Church of Rome, or by the emotional nervous spasms accompanying that peculiar process styled "getting belief" or "being converted?" In one case the heart is reached through the outward senses; in the other, through the nerves. Can the like process be attained through the brain? To the poor, the teaching of a kingdom not of this world which they may inherit is all-enticing. They hope to enjoy the good

there they have missed on earth ; and although I myself believe that very few people are rendered better by hopes of a future heaven, or fears of a possible hell, still the creed which holds out tangible rewards and punishments will always be believed in by the multitude. These, with an assumption of supernatural authority, have from early ages controlled mankind ; and although there has of late years been a great decline in ecclesiastical authority throughout the world, still the believers in that authority are yet numerous ; and many who, contrasting comforting teachings—such as Mr. Strong’s—with the poverty and misery there is outside the Churches, can find for themselves no explanation of the incongruity, rush to the relief afforded them by “absolute authority,” which settles all their doubts and scruples of conscience ; in fact, objects to their thinking for themselves at all. Will Mr. Strong’s teaching lead to any great belief ? I do not mean faith ; but that belief—that courage of their opinions—which led the early Christian martyrs, many of the warriors of the Crusades, and all of Mahomet’s followers, to gladly welcome death for their cause. I am aware that, in devotion to ideas, these deeds have been emulated by patriots and enthusiasts : such enthusiasm does not depend entirely on a religious motive. But can Mr. Strong arouse, by his preaching of the religion of humanity, sufficient enthusiasm in his congregation to effect any lasting good ? I hope so, and recognize in his broad tolerance for all faiths one who is in advance of his Church and times, and unfortunately, I think, of the majority of people through all time, who will, I am afraid, never be sufficiently educated *en masse* up to a due appreciation of this spiritual religion of humanity.

Mr. Strong gave us a short sermon. He, I am told, generally follows Sydney Smith’s advice as to the length of sermons—

“twenty minutes, with a leaning to the side of mercy.” Afterwards, there was the usual weekly collection. I contributed my mite ; and, whilst doing so, thought of the old Scotch story of the man who inadvertently put half-a-crown in the plate instead of his regular modest donation. Discovering his mistake, he afterwards waited on the elder, and wished to rectify the same, but was told that what was given was given, and could not be changed. “Ah, weel,” he said, “I winna fash mysel’—I’ll get credit for the half-croon.” “Na, na, mon,” was the reply, “ye’ll only get credit for the bawbee!” From the point of view of only getting credit for intentions, I am afraid I am not much the better for the morning thus spent in a Fashionable Church.

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### A SUBURBAN CHURCH.

My article on “Sunday Excursions” got me into trouble with some of the good people of Melbourne. “It’s very cleverly done,” I heard one venerable gentleman say ; “it purports to be an account of a trip down the Bay, whereas, in fact, it is a shameless defence of Sabbath-breaking.” I have to thank many of the occupants of metropolitan pulpits for kindly mention of my endeavours to point out public abuses, but now I have for ever lost favour in their sight. It’s the way of the world ! Before I went to the Alfred Hospital, and, so to speak, trod on one of Mr. Service’s pet corns, that hon. gentleman was an ardent admirer of my writings, and fully approved of my exposing the evils existing in the management of any public institution, except “Service’s Own.” So the gentlemen of the

Geneva gown embraced me in the spirit when I wrote of that crying scandal—the condition of the theatre vestibules—and some of them made it a text against the drama. But when I advocate healthy relaxation for the people on their one day of rest and pleasure, the pulpit is against me. The reverend gentleman who so ably ministers to the easily-satisfied spiritual wants of the congregation of the Baptist Church in Albert-street was, erstwhile, a great friend of mine; but on Sunday last wailed over my backsliding, and implored his hearers to avoid the sin of Sabbath-breaking and Sunday excursions, and “not spend the day smoking and drinking like the ‘Vagabond.’” I was held up to the good little Baptists as a frightful example, but I hope and believe that I have still some unknown friends in that congregation, and I will point out to them that it is quite possible to spend the Sabbath “smoking and drinking” without taking a healthy excursion to Queenscliff or Sorrento.

But I do not always pass the dull and sacred day in such manner. It may be that my conscience pricked me for my misdeeds on the previous week, or that I felt I had too long neglected my spiritual welfare. Anyhow, I attended Church twice last Sunday, and, in spite of my well-known vicious tastes and proclivities, I rather liked it. I went to spend the day with a friend of mine residing in the Punt-road, and in the morning we canvassed the programme. I thought it would be rather good fun to go to the Alfred Hospital in the afternoon, and be stuck up by the hall-porter for contraband. But my friend said, “Church, it’s a special collection to-day, and one ought not to miss, although there’s the offertory every Sunday. I remember in my youth, in our parish church in England, if we had a collection more than twice a year, the vestrymen would begin to talk about it, and want to know ‘what parson was at.’”

Here one is always giving. But a gentleman is bound to support his Church, so let's go." I said I'd do it, though with a sort of inward idea that I was sacrificed to the collection, and we started for Christ Church. This, the parish church of South Yarra, is pleasantly located at the corner of the Punt and Toorak roads. It is built, cross-shaped, of that useful but sombre bluestone which is ill appropriate to ornamental architecture in this climate. The inside is as dull and tasteless as the outer. The bare walls are unrelieved by any line to break the monotony. There is no severe chasteness, as in the Scots Church—simply dull ugliness. There are some stained glass windows, not of much account; and a brass plate commemorating the virtues of the late Mr. Haines, old colonist and Chief Secretary, is the only other thing to catch the eye. At the eastern end a mean wooden screen or partition forms the vestry and background for the communion-table, one of the most atrocious arrangements I have ever seen in an Episcopal Church. The organ is, I think, in the wrong place. I managed to get a seat near the pulpit, and watched the congregation coming in. The Church was crowded with, as usual, a large proportion of the fair sex. A fashionable assembly in its way, after the fashion of Bayswater or the Notting Hill Crescents. Altogether, a gathering of a pleasant local community. It is needless, however, to state that the ladies were all well dressed and handsome—in Australia *cela va sans dire*—and that it made one feel good to worship in such society. Mr. Justice Fellows, who lives opposite, is one of the great supporters of the Church—a tower of strength in himself. But even his efforts, seconded by the efforts of others, could not, some time back, prevent a great falling off in the congregation. The present incumbent, the Rev. Mr. Guinness, is old, and in

the sere and yellow leaf, liked and respected by all his parishioners, who, however, except the faithful few, liked him too well to go and listen to his sermons. Sunday after Sunday there was, so to speak, a beggarly account of empty benches. But some nine months ago Mr. Guinness received leave of absence to visit England, and the vestry was fortunate in engaging the present *locum tenens*, the Rev. W. P. Pearce, whose graphic sermons have brought back recreant pew-holders and "filled the house." His is quite a starring engagement, and has been eminently successful. An extra attraction has been lately offered in the presence of the Governor, family, and suite, who weekly attend Christ Church, Sir George Bowen being, I believe, a friend of Mr. Pearce. But the people of this colony are too sensible to besiege any public place because the Governor attends. The sight of vice-royalty is an everyday one, and I have heard theatre managers lament that "there's no money in the Governor's attendance ; it don't draw an extra shilling." This being the case, I give, and am confirmed by the testimony of the oldest parishioner, all merit to Mr. Pearce for the present good congregation at Christ Church ; although it is pleasant to say your prayers in the company of Her Majesty's representative.

I came out to hear Mr. Pearce, but was disappointed on Sunday morning last, for this being the twenty-first anniversary of the Church, Dr. Bromby (as a special attraction) preached in the morning, and endeavoured to draw the shillings out of our pockets. However, I always like the liturgy of the Church of England, the principal part of which was rendered by the curate, a dark, bilious, sad-looking young man, reminding me much of Mr. Ashton Dilke, brother of Sir Charles Dilke, and proprietor of the *Weekly Dispatch*, with whom I once travelled

in Russia. I won't say that I was very much impressed, but even my catholic, impartial, rational, and vagabond mind cherishes a sneaking fondness for the Episcopal Church, into whose fold I was in my early and unconscious days provisionally received, and I enjoyed myself, thinking of days gone by, when, at an English public school, to which I was expatriated, I had to attend Church three times each Sunday and every day during Lent, besides the morning prayers. I reckon that, during those four years, I put in enough time to make even now my average a very fair one. From the ugliness of the Church I was afraid we should have a very Calvinistic service, but I was agreeably disappointed in the singing. The "Te Deum" was very well rendered, the psalms well chanted, and the only fault with the anthems was that they were a little too long. The organist and choir both deserve praise. The former is one of the masters of the Church of England Grammar School and a son of Dr. Bromby, and is a real musician. It was rather warm last Sunday morning, and one's attention wandered away from the service a good deal. The ladies I saw criticising the dresses of the Misses Bowen, their gracious mamma not being there. I admired His Excellency. Sir George is a glorious example of the healthiness of the Australian colonies, and his hale, hearty vigour is a remarkable fact, not to be overlooked in connexion therewith. Then I surveyed the stalwart form of my old acquaintance, Major Pitt, R.A. I envy him his nerve, health, and strength. At last, Dr. Bromby mounted the pulpit, and gave out the text from 19th Proverbs, 21st verse—"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Dr. Bromby is not an elegant-looking man, but he's good and popular. I've heard one lady say "he ought to be a bishop," which is praise indeed. He is a man of deep learning



and liberal views, and his sermons are generally original: as one of his congregation said, "they are all good for something or other." On Sunday, he galloped over a considerable portion of sacred and profane history, instancing the devices of men's hearts which did not stand. Abraham and Sarah, Rebecca and Jacob, Pharaoh and Moses, Jezebel and Ahab, Herod *re* the Massacre of the Innocents—all these, the doctor showed, had been slated in their vain desires. Then he got on to Napoleon I.—Josephine's divorce—and showed how the Lord punished the first Emperor for his abominable treatment of his wife by removing the Duke of Reichstadt, and making his nephew (and a grandson of Josephine) ruler over France. This was hard on the Second Napoleon, and a good line for the Third. If the doctor had correctly narrated the latter's parentage, it would have added an additional moral to the tale. Then O'Farrell's device in attempting to shoot the Duke of Edinburgh was instanced; and the doctor gloried in the fact that this land was saved from the disgrace of shedding royal blood. I was very much afraid that the Alfred Hospital would be alluded to, but it was not. Altogether, the doctor pointed out that we must see the finger of God in everything. The Bible record was the history of the Jews, but only such parts of their history as particularly showed the ways of Providence; and present history must be judged in the same manner, and we must draw a like moral from the events of to-day. In fact, the sequence, according to Dr. Bromby, is, that "whatever is, is right," and is directly sanctioned by Providence, and that all the devices of man's heart are of no account whatever if they fail; but if they succeed, no matter what they be, the work is God's. It was an original sermon, but a mixed-up one, which floored my theology.

As I wanted to hear Mr. Pearce, I had to attend Church again at night. Evening service is not generally fashionable in any part of the civilized world. People who feed at reasonable hours cannot bolt their dinners to be at Church at seven. In New York eight o'clock is the general time of commencement, and the service seldom exceeds an hour. I was surprised and pleased to see the large attendance at Christ Church on Sunday night, and especially the large proportion of young people of both sexes. When a clergyman can attract the rising generation, he is doing a good work. And on such a hot evening attendance at Church is decidedly a virtue, which I, for one, could not keep up through the season. The Governor's party, of course, was not there, and the only attraction was the service and sermon. The curate officiated, as in the morning, and the "Magnificat" and anthems were well sung. As regards the latter, I think some rule ought to be made, as it seems absurd to see half the congregation standing and half sitting. Mr. Pearce assisted by reading the lessons, the first of which was that celebrated chapter from Isaiah, describing how the lion will lie down with the lamb, and young children will be the playmates of dangerous reptiles. In those millennial days Professor Halford and his remedy will be as naught, and the soul of the "Vagabond" will be no longer vexed by fears of seeing snakes doing the block on Collins-street, as one of these will be a bosom friend in every household. A very beautiful chapter, indeed; but this millennium seems as far off as ever. Even after the new era of "peace on earth and good will toward men," wars and rumours of wars, battle, murder, and sudden death are all around us, and the destructive forces of animal nature are as dangerous as ever. It was a hopeful prophecy of the grand old Hebrew writer, but one which seems

little likely to be fulfilled in the present state of the world. I am afraid that, for many long years, the foolish lamb which attempts to lie down with the lion will find its confidence misplaced ; and the child which plays with a venomous snake will want whisky or Halford's remedy. A gentleman remarked to me the other night that it was a wise ordination of Providence that Australia, which possesses poisonous reptiles, should also possess Professor Halford. I trust he was not chaffing me.

During the lessons I studied the reader. A short time back I was privileged to be present at a pleasant little dinner—one of those oases which are occasionally met with in the dreary desert of my state of vagabondage. Talking of public men in various parts of the world, a gentleman, who is kind enough to acknowledge my acquaintance in private, although we sometimes cut each other in public, said, "I never heard of anyone yet whom the Vagabond didn't know." An early entrance into public life, and a natural liking for the society of distinguished people, has made me acquainted with many who are now making and recording contemporaneous history. It happens that I know the present occupier of the pulpit at Christ Church, South Yarra. The Rev. William P. Pearce is a wandering Protestant preacher, going to and fro on the face of the earth, ably fulfilling his mission. He is a Cambridge man, and first studied and practised law at home ; but I expect the chicaneries of that profession disgusted him, and he felt worthy of better things, and so took holy orders as a priest of the Church of England. He is a man of high culture, and literary tastes and acquirements, and before he became a clergyman he wrote a book. Now, many people write books and articles for magazines and newspapers ; but what I respect Mr. Pearce for is,

that he sold the copyright of his production and made money. That was fair and business-like ; for, in my mind, if there is one detestable and for ever to be execrated individual, it is the amateur author, who, through vanity, publishes his works, often at a loss, and gluts the market with rubbish, to the prejudice of the talented men who live by their brains. The individuals who, in England and America—and I daresay in Australia—offer to contribute articles gratuitously to the press for the purpose of seeing their precious effusions in type, are likewise to be abhorred by all right-thinking men, and for them an extra circle should have been added to Dante's *Inferno*. Of course, I only refer to general literature. In the case of any great political or social principle, anyone is justified in, if he can, finding readers to study his reasons for the faith which is within him. I would not encourage this, however, unless one happens to be an ex-Prime Minister, or an evangelical and temperance Member of Parliament. In the first case, one can write polemical or denunciatory pamphlets, like Mr. Gladstone, and find publishers offering blank cheques for the copyright. In the second, like "Baby" Jenkins, the member for Dundee, one can write goody-goody claptrap "padded" effusions on every current event, and find that the initials "M.P.," and the reputation for sanctity, will ensure the sale of thousands of copies and put money in the purse. Through the fact that he has sold, not only written—anyone can do that—a book, Mr. Pearce is to be welcomed into the guild of literature, and this is one of the first reasons why I respect him. For some few years I believe Mr. Pearce has been absent from England, wandering round the world in search of rest and health, but taking everywhere any work which came to his hand to do. I knew him in America, where at one time he

officiated in New York city, and afterwards at Tarrytown, a charming retreat on the Hudson River, of which he must always treasure pleasant reminiscences. All about the States, on the West Indian steamers, Pacific mail boats, and in Californian cities, Mr. Pearce has followed his mission, and I can vouch that, as a priest and a gentleman, he was everywhere respected and admired. It's an extraordinary fact that I should find him here, but the world is a very little place now a-days. I remember at Warwick races running across an English baronet whom I had met on the cars of the Texas Pacific Railway, he being in those parts for purposes of buffalo slaughtering. "Sir Henry, I'm pleased to have met you," said I; "at the same time I feel the fact that I can never go anywhere without being known is highly embarrassing." "The world's too small," said Sir Henry; "even in your country I felt cramped, not sufficient space or freedom. Try that dry wine." He was a gentleman of an excellent wit, and gave me the repartee admirably.

One's first impression, on looking at Mr. Pearce, is the thorough manliness of his face, and the calm judgment likely to result from the phrenologically well-developed and well-balanced head. That's about correct. In his sermons and teachings, Mr. Pearce is essentially manly and liberal. His is a broad, expansive, everyday Christianity, one which may be understood by the many without bewildering themselves amongst the mysteries of revelation, or going through the strange, nervous, hysterical process known as "conversion." Mr. Pearce seems to me to be admirably suited to occupy some old English rectory or vicarage. He would tone down and liberalize the sometimes too exclusive and narrow ideas of "my lord," or "the squire," and although, as a rule, I totally object to clergymen being in the commission of the peace, he would

make an excellent county magistrate. But, after all, in such a position, a really good man is thrown away. The scholar rusts, and the intellectual preacher finds himself in time caring less and less about the quality of his sermons, not having an appreciative audience. Mr. Pearce deserves a metropolitan congregation, and I think it a great pity that, as I am told, he is going to India. Good preachers and brilliant scholars are rather scarce in the Episcopal Church of Victoria. His text on Sunday night was Psalm cxxii. 1—5, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord." With a poetical description of old English Churches and Cathedrals, and a tribute to the piety and taste of many of the old monks, who built as a labour of love, Mr. Pearce artfully seized the attention of his hearers. To the natives of the colony he pointed out that, in this young country of no memories, if they had no past to look back to with love, they had at least nothing to regret. No records of bloody superstitions disgraced the Church buildings of Victoria. That's all very well as regards the Church, but I bethought me of certain memories which in New South Wales they would be glad to forget. Then Mr. Pearce expressed his surprise at the general shabby condition of the buildings of the Episcopal Church in Victoria. He humorously described how, when he first walked along Collins-street and saw "the tall white spire," he thought "of course that must be the Cathedral," and how disappointed he was when he found that that noble building had been erected by the piety and munificence, not of the members of the Church of England, but of the Scotch Presbyterians of Melbourne. He gave ample credit to the other Churches for their spirit in erecting and maintaining magnificent places of worship, and sadly contrasted the lack of zeal of the

members of the Established Church in this colony. Then he, so to say, pitched into the congregation of Christ Church for their neglect of their edifice, winding up with a judicious appeal to our pockets. It was a very good sermon, very well delivered, but not one to show off the beauties of Mr. Pearce's scholarly and poetical style, as "begging sermons" must always suffer from the perceptible motive running throughout.

On the Sundays before and after the Cup Day Mr. Pearce preached two sermons on "The Use and Abuse of Play," which were much criticized at the time, and have attracted general attention. From these I make the following extracts, showing the rev. gentleman's liberality of spirit, which I wish every one possessed. In the first sermon, taking his text from Corinthians, and St. Paul's allusion to the Isthmian games, he says :—"No one with a fragment of common sense would seek to deprive a people of its amusement—whether that amusement be taken on a racecourse or in a theatre. The former promotes the breeding and rearing of fine horses, a thing of the first importance in a country like this; the latter, if properly conducted, conduces to the highest moral and intellectual culture. St. Paul had far too much good sense and knowledge of the world to advise his Corinthian converts to avoid the Isthmian games; and he was not afraid to quote from a comedy of Menander, when seeking to impress them with the great, vital truth of our Lord's resurrection. But he did advise them to be 'temperate in all things.' Pleasure may be pleasure without being fast and furious; enjoyment need not degenerate into excess. A man of wealth may back his opinion of the merit of his horse without staking his whole fortune on the issue of a race; a woman may dress with elegance and taste without jeopardizing her husband's position,

her own fair fame, and exciting envy and scandal by reckless extravagance of costume. The golden mean is proverbially hard of attainment, but that is no reason why we should not try to attain it, and pray for grace and strength to attain it, remembering that though God, when He gave us life, intended that we should have a fair and reasonable share of pleasure and enjoyment, never intended that the quickly-fading crown should be the aim and end of that life."

In the second sermon, after pointing out the need of physical rest to the man who labours with his hands, he graphically sketches the career of the brain-worker, and shows how he will break down with over-work, unless relieved by play. Then he says :—"The people of Victoria seem to me to be fonder of play than any people I have yet come amongst, and the question arises—Are we too fond of it? Do we lose, or do we score? The Americans have no idea of play. They carry their business with them everywhere. Their thoughts are in Wall-street if their bodies are at Long Branch or Saratoga. They turn pleasure into business, and regard churches and picture galleries—the treasures of ancient art—as so much work to be done; and they boast themselves as having done it. This is all wrong, doubtless. But do we go to the other extreme? Do we work enough? The test is an easy and a simple one, and you will anticipate me when I submit to you that it is this—Does our play give us zest or distaste for our work? If the former, it is good; if the latter, it is bad. If the cup of pleasure, of which we have lately drunk so deeply, indisposes and unfits us for the serious business of life—makes us restless, dissatisfied, and discontented, it is surely a sign that we have drunk of it too deeply. If, on the other hand, we go back to our business strengthened and refreshed, and



with a feeling of satisfaction at being again at our work, then our play has done us good."

This is good, sound, practical sense and Christianity, which I quite agree with. Mr. Pearce, too, is right about the American's eagerness in pleasure and business; but his remarks are principally applicable to the citizens of the Northern States. Down South we were brought up to take things easy.

I think the collection on Sunday night was a pretty good one. "Pilgrims of the Night" was sung in such a manner, one mezzo-soprano voice rising high and clear above the rest, that I felt it alone worth double what I dropped in the plate. The only thing I have to find fault with in this Suburban Church is, that the varnish on the pews is of a quality which is easily reduced to the sticking point, and the coat which I had borrowed to attend decently was nearly ruined thereby.

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### A MORNING AT FLEMINGTON.

I THINK I have before expressed my antipathy to early rising. It is opposed to my natural instincts and acquired habits. Still, when by a strong effort of moral courage I turned out at four a.m. on the Saturday morning before the Cup Day, I felt rewarded by an innate consciousness of virtue, and was also recompensed by the sight of a glorious sunrise. After a bath and a nip of Bourbon whisky—which it is my custom always to take as an infallible preventive against snake-bites, and the efficacy of which is proved by the fact that I have *not* been bitten by a snake in Victoria—I sallied out into the cool morning air. The venerable mongrel, who imagines he earns his board by

frantically barking when I come in late of a night, was so much astonished at my apparition at such an unwonted hour, that he forgot to even growl. Passing through the Fitzroy Gardens, on my way to hold my tryst at the General Post Office, I found myself, as it were, in Eden. Sparrows and Minah birds hopped about my path, the dewy air was scented with the perfume of flowers. I was alone with Nature, until a pariah hound came and fraternized with me. The balmy influences sank into my soul, and I felt good enough to go to matins. It was too early for working people, and, until I got into Bourke-street, I had the city to myself, although I passed an open public-house, prepared to catch the early and thirsty worm. Passing down Bourke-street, I found the country market carts extending nearly from the White Hart to Russell-street. These were laden with the rich products, of garden and farm—vegetables, fruit, cheese, butter, and eggs—whose grosser suggestions were toned down by the scent of hundreds of bouquets of flowers. These materials—bountifully provided by Mother Nature in this colony for administering both to comfort and luxury—appealed both to the appetite and finer senses, and I felt more evangelical than ever. The market and its neighbourhood were quite lively; retail dealers, hucksters, and hotel stewards were chaffering with the country people, and my friend John Chinaman was in great force. At a stall in Swanston-street I had a cup of coffee and read *The Argus* for a fee of twopence, the cheapest investment I have made in Victoria. Here some early breakfasters began talking “horse,” and I found that the *vox populi* was decidedly in favour of Newminster, both for the single and double events of Derby and Cup.

You see I’ve got round to my point at last. Having gone into the sporting prophet line of business, I am forced to turn

"tout," which accounts for the foregoing spasm of virtuous early rising. It was my first visit to Flemington, and I enjoyed the drive, although there is nothing particularly striking in the country *en route*. Arrived at the crest of the Hill, we looked down on the natural amphitheatre which has been formed into the racecourse and training grounds of the Victoria Racing Club. Art has supplemented nature in making this one of the most perfect courses in the world. But why, oh ! why was such a hideous Grand Stand erected ? It may well be called a cowshed. Early though we were, there was a goodly collection of people by the "scraping sheds," watching their equine favourites as they came in and out from exercising. Privileged individuals impressed ordinary bystanders with their importance by the manner in which they examined fetlocks and hoofs. Scattered about the ground, watching the performances on the different tracks of sand, tan, and cinder (a most excellent arrangement) were other groups of touts. For we were all touts, differing in degree, but still with one object, the scrutiny of the horses before us, with the hope of discovering something by which, directly or indirectly, we might make money. First, here were the newspaper-touts, the sporting reporters of the daily press, and the great oracles, "Augur," "Beacon," "Nemo," "Asmodeus," &c., before whose utterances men bow down, and bet, and cry, "They have said, and Newminster must win !" These gentlemen, for whom I have the very highest respect—not knowing them—will, I trust, not be offended at any apparent encroachment on their prerogative. The spirit of sporting prophecy with which I am now endowed is only a temporary one, and will not last long. Sporting writers in England generally base their predictions on calculations arrived at from the previous public form or market

state of a favourite. Here, these gentlemen whom I refer to not only take such into consideration, but daily tout, and with their own eyes endeavour to form correct conclusions to place before the public; and in this they do their work honestly and well. Then, there is the trainer-tout, the man who watches not only the movements of his own horses, but particularly those of his rivals, often giving these the greatest attention. One trainer, who is renowned as a spinner of racy yarns, and is always losing his moderate bets, is great as a tout of other people's horses. Next there are the bookmaker-touts, "metallicians," who fancy they know something about horse-flesh, and will not trust others to furnish them with any information. There is the amateur-tout, who may have really a love for a horse, and a good knowledge of his points: he has come out to watch the performance of some favourite, and will return to town, perhaps to business, full of the information he has acquired, with "100 to 5 taken up to a thousand" mingling with the figures in his ledger. Then there is the tout *per se*, who is nothing but such—a seedy, disreputable individual, who, but for a sporting turn of mind, would have been a politician. He is, or endeavours to be, on intimate terms with jockeys and stable boys, and to his more credulous clients has always a wonderful "stable secret" for disposal. He acts for a large circle of clients; the bookmakers will pay him for any early and accurate information as to the performance of favourites; shopkeepers and publicans accept his weekly tips, and, besides supplying him with present beer and half-crowns, promise him "a fiver" or a "tenner," if the good thing he has given them comes off. Except that he risks no money, his *modus operandi* is much the same as the *theory* of book-making—in practice, the "talent" may find themselves

astray after a meeting. The tout takes so many horses which are likely to win, and gives their names as tips to so many different clients, with much secret and important information and instructions how to "get on." To those to whom he has tipped losers, he will be profuse of apologies and explanations why "the 'oss" ought, but didn't win. Those who have won on his tip will most likely, with colonial generosity, double their promised gratuity; and so, year by year, he makes a dirty living. This is the class of men who, in England, "send the winner of the Derby for twenty-four stamps." Victorians are not quite such fools in racing matters as London clerks and shop boys; still, their knowledge of the turf makes them more credulous of the apparently superior knowledge of the professional tout.

On the turf there is true democracy. Amongst all this crowd of touts there were trainers of Victoria and of New South Wales, shopkeepers and clerks of sporting tendencies; sporting publicans, who make a modest book, or bet on commission, and a few gentlemen. There were outlawed black-legs, men who subsist by getting up sham "sweeps," or laying against "dead 'uns;" amongst their number, some who have broken all laws human and divine, and should be hounded from the society of even ordinarily vicious men. There were Jew bookmakers (applied only as a national distinction—for religion these certainly have none), one of these, an old money lender, being an especially noted character. He lends at a few hundred per cent. per annum, and the mode of calculating such interest is easy, but the intricacies of a betting-book require a little higher education or natural aptitude for figures. Now, this old Shylock has neither, and his book is kept by his son. In his greed he is continually laying odds in bets which, in his cautious moments, and after consulting with his son, he will revoke, or

pay small sums as forfeit to cancel. Another I hear described as a "smart man." "Well, if you call making a stiff 'un smart, he may be," was the reply. This appears to be a favourite occupation of the Victorian bookmaker: but only the minor fry of the ring and of the tribes are down this morning. "The Leviathan" and "King of the Ring" does not rise at such an early hour, but shows up in the afternoon. He and his brothers—the mystic trio, who control the betting-ring of Victoria—are tritons to these minnows who are touting. But let it be clearly understood that I don't respect them any the more for that. I admit to having "a down" on the ring. Mr. Thomas Hughes, who, as the author of *Tom Brown's School Days*, is known as an advocate of manly sports and an opposer of cant, once said in the House of Commons, "the members of the betting-ring are chiefly some of the greatest scoundrels unhung." I think he had reason, and that his remarks would equally apply to Victoria. I believe that, under the present system, betting neither blesses him that gives nor him that takes the odds. A chance in a friendly "sweep," a bet between gentlemen, or wager between man and man, I do not object to; but the whole system on which the betting-ring is founded is a vicious one, and breeds a spirit of chicanery and swindling. The book-makers endeavour by every means in their power to win your money, and you return the compliment. Cheating is universal, and the old high standard of gentlemanly honour has been lowered during the last quarter of a century by the operations of the betting-ring, which is a fungus of recent and rapid growth in England. In the present contest between "the gentlemen" and "the talent," the one endeavour is to deceive each other as to the merits or demerits of certain horses. There may be

still a few high-toned gentlemen who declare the merits of their horses, and run them to win on such ; but how often we hear in England that Mr. Swellpace has scratched a horse because "he was forestalled in the market"—that is, he could not get sufficient odds to satisfy himself, and so he reserves it for a future race, when he will try to get on early for a heavy sum. Many devote their whole attention to breeding "a dark horse," and obtaining heavy odds against its winning some great event. To deceive the ring, all sorts of rumours are circulated. Another stable companion is ostensibly backed, and is supposed to be "meant," when, suddenly, from different quarters, commissions are issued to back the dark one, and the money is got on. The dark horse does not always win—it is generally the other way ; but the members of the ring are keenly alive to the efforts made to bleed them, and return the attempt in kind. And so the struggle goes on ; in chicanery, "the gentlemen" cannot over-reach "the professionals ;" and the result often is, that some historic name is dragged through the mud of the Bankruptcy Court, the estate won by the sword of some Norman baron is in the hands of "commissioners," and the ruined owner of a title—no longer honoured as of yore—seeks shelter in a foreign land. The ring and the tribes have picked his bones. If I hate the ring bitterly, it is not only that it has ruined many a noble gentleman, but that previously his honour was smirched in the contest with its members. People talk about the honour of bookmakers and their generosity. They pay their losses, when they can well afford it, because they know they must do so to preserve their standing and future prosperity. They are foolishly lavish, because they recognize not the value of money for which they have not worked, and are generally considered by hotelkeepers to be fine-spirited fellows, because they drink

champagne and smoke shilling cigars, when their deserts only entitle them to beer and 'baccy.

The ordinary betting man in England is bad enough, but the highly successful ones of Victoria are worse. They are still greater rogues. Here, unfortunately, the line between gentlemen and "professionals" is not sufficiently defined, and such men as the "operator," who has imitated his countryman, Baron Grant, in changing his Biblical name to an ordinary Anglo-Saxon one, receive an amount of adulation, and are recognized by people who should know better. It may be a lowly occupation that of selling fish, but it is not necessarily dishonest—however, I am wandering away from the training-ground at Flemington. Amongst all the different groups there I strolled—as is my wont—listening to their talk. The jockeys and stable-boys are looked after pretty sharply by the trainers, and I had no chance of bribing them or poisoning any horse. The lads I talked with were all very sweet on their particular stable, and although they allowed Newminster might be first, they were pretty sure they knew a "'oss as would be very near him at the finish." Then, too, it was stated that Newminster would not be allowed to win; "he's backed for more money than any 'oss ever carried before, half a million at least, and he'll be nobbled on the course." The belief in the powers of villainy of the bookmakers was universal and flattering. The most respectable portion of the company present passed their time sitting on fences at the lower end of the ground; the Sydney contingent, however, adopting a peculiar style of squatting like a Hindoo, pensively plucking blades of grass. Racy yarns were spun by Mr. Filgate; the new coursing club was criticized, and the whereabouts of Irish Stew was a topic of discussion. Some said this horse was at Woodstock, others at Ararat, being



trained in secret for fear of its being "nobbled." What a fine manly sport racing is! There were a few real thorough gentlemen here, and amongst them Mr. Bagot, the energetic Secretary of the V.R.C. I know nothing of this gentleman, but love him for one thing. He came up riding an old, broken-down, respectable-looking horse, the sort of steady animal which would convey an English farmer safe home from market dinners, finding the road when its driver, for various reasons, could not. I heard that this horse was Badger, a celebrated steeplechaser which won many noted races. Two of his owners committed suicide, the last being that erratic poet, genius, and sportsman, Lindsay Gordon. After his death, poor Badger fell upon evil days, his youthful prime was gone, and his market value at last reduced to three half-crowns, for which sum he was sold to the knackers. He was being driven past Mr. Bagot's house, when that gentleman asked the man what horse it was. "Badger! Lindsay Gordon's famous hunter, going to the knackers!" Bagot's soul was wroth within him, and he swore it should not be whilst he lived. He purchased the poor old horse and turned him out to grass, and fed him with corn. He at least should die happy. On this kind treatment Badger waxed fat and strong, his youthful powers revived, and he is now a steady hack, "useful to ride or drive," and, if put to it, will take a fence as lightly as of yore. So his preserver is rewarded.

About the real business of the morning, the "fast work," "striding gallops," and "gentle canters" indulged in by the favourites, I shall say nothing. But, even to any one totally ignorant of racing matters, the scene had its charms. The strings of blanketed horses gently walking around, others stripped, quietly cantering; others still, racing at their full pace. It was an undress rehearsal. As the horses came

thundering past us, it was curious to watch the faces of the riders. Boys, mostly in their shirt sleeves, had an eager, intent look—it was evidently hard work to them. Some older jockeys had a quiet, determined appearance, the brand of many a tough finish. The “finest horseman in Australia” was pointed out to me as also being the “——est rogue who ever put his leg over a horse,” which rather neutralizes his accomplishments. But the touts were very particular in watching the gallops. Stop-watch in hand, reporters and trainers carefully timed the moment of starting and finishing the round of the track, criticizing the performances as the horses passed, afterwards comparing notes as to the time. Something, of course, may be judged from these trials as to a horse’s condition, but they are no real criterions of the merits of rival performers. Touts can never tell what weights the horses carry; shrewd trainers will not even let the riders know, and an extra five pounds slipped under the saddle will make all the difference between ordinary and first-rate time over the two miles. I admired the quickness of eye of many of these gentlemen; they would separately name each of a string of clothed horses, and could, without aid from their field-glasses, say the moment when performers began to gallop, although far away at the other side of the course. I found there was a little rivalry existing between Victorian and New South Wales trainers. It appeared to be thought that the struggle would be an intercolonial one, Newminster and Tocal being the respective champions. At Tocal’s performances round the Derby course a leading trainer sneered, saying, “He’ll have to go a little faster than that to win; and there’s a little hoss down at Point Cook will show him and the rest his hind-quarters—that’s all they’ll see at the finish.” This sentiment was highly popular with the Victorians. In this manner hour

after hour passed, the touts, as well as the horses, receiving great benefit from inhaling the breezy morning air. I began to think that this was the correct form of existence; it was healthful and lazy, and did not appear to demand any great strain on the intellect. I made up my mind to go into the touting business seriously; and this resolution was not shaken after partaking of an excellent breakfast at the Racecourse Hotel. We sat down a sort of "happy family," quite an incongruous collection. Reporters, trainers, bookmakers, Jews and Christians, infidels and heretics, gentlemen, vagabonds, and blackguards, all made good time, the sweetbreads being the principal plate for which we entered, and the performance about equal. Apricot jam and cream closed the meeting. Afterwards, there were many entries at the bar, and the smoke of prime Havannahs scented the morning air. Touts enjoy themselves, and, in fine weather, their occupation is to be envied. On wet days, though, it must be pretty miserable; but then many of the fraternity survey the course from the hotel through their field and other glasses. On such occasions the reports and tips are more than usually glowing. Touting at Flemington is, amongst a large section, decidedly respectable and luxurious, far different to such at Newmarket, where the seedy individuals who act the spy for London bookmakers stand a good chance of being horsewhipped off the Heath by some irate trainer, if they pay too particular attention to any favourite. Still, the arrangements for touting are defective to a certain extent, and might be improved upon. A few seats and card-tables scattered about the grounds, and a waterproof tent or two, would conduce to our comfort, and help some of us to pass the lazy hours profitably. I recommend this to the attention of Mr. Bagot and the Committee of the V.R.C.

## THE CUP DAY—1876.

## THE EVE OF "THE CUP."

THE gathering and festivities in honour of the Melbourne Cup are totally unlike anything else I have seen in the world. The show seems to me to be a mixture of a Fourth of July celebration, *Mardi Gras*, an Italian carnival, the Derby and Goodwood Race meetings, and the Agricultural Show at Islington. No purely race meeting in England will compare with it. The Derby is a mighty gathering, one of the grandest sights in the world; but Epsom is too remote from London to allow of the races there affecting that great centre in the manner "the Cup" festival takes hold of every part, and nearly every inhabitant, of Melbourne. The show on the Lawn may be said to resemble that at Goodwood; but there the meeting is attended chiefly by the upper ten thousand, and "the people" are in a minority. Cup Day here is not only a great sporting feast, it is a fashionable *fête* and public and national holiday, and its importance is intensified by the presence of the Governors and chief citizens of neighbouring colonies. It is a rejoicing unique in all its aspects, which Victorians may well be proud of.

For the past week a strong element of *rus in urbe* has been seen in the streets of Melbourne. The intercolonial and coasting steamers have been crowded. From the country districts, railroads and coaches have discharged their living freights. Besides ostensible pleasure-seekers, a large number of people have informed the partners of their cares and joys that they have a "little business down in Melbourne." Such is the duplicity of man! The accommodation at the principal hotels

is severely taxed, and young men from the country, carpet-bag in hand, were on Monday to be seen wandering about the streets in search of convenient or economical lodgings. The price of bed and board has risen considerably at minor taverns, whose proprietors wish to make their golden hay during the sunshine of custom of the race week. I am told, however, that this year the supply of accommodation is quite equal to the demand. The amount of bad liquor consumed during the past few days must have been enormous. At every public place, and in every private family, "horse" was talked. The Cup fever had seized on all Melbourne. From the vice-regal palace to the home of the artisan on Collingwood Flat, or rookery in Little Bourke-street, the one leading topic of conversation was, "who will win?" Something of this may be seen in London before the Derby, but the excitement there is very superficial. At clubs, places of business, and public resorts, people talk about the favourite because it is considered to be the thing, but the majority know nothing at all about a horse, and never bet. In Victoria, where sport, as well as work, seems the natural heritage of all (and I am thankful it is so), many really know something about the merits of horses, and take more than a mere cursory interest in racing. Perhaps, to a majority, the Cup Day is only a pleasant outing, but in this respect, I think, not to the same proportion as at the English Derby. Everyone, too, from the Governor to children at school, appears to have some interest in the race in respect of bets or sweepstakes. This is really a gambling community; men, women, and children seem to be affected alike, all wishing to back a horse or take a chance in a "sweep." On this occasion, and for once in a while, I am not going to quarrel with the popular folly. Because I am virtuous, I cannot and would not

deprive the masses of "cakes and ale." Besides, backing one's opinion with a friend is a different thing to making a trade of betting, either as a bookmaker or owner of racehorses.

On Monday night Melbourne seemed given up to pleasure. It is true that, besides the life and motion in the principal streets, there was also a glare of light from shop windows, kept open until a late hour to catch the country custom. Even in the suburbs the stores did not close until midnight, and a considerable trade was done in white hats, veils, and fancy scarfs, the colours of the popular favourites. But I am afraid the outlay in gas did not in all cases meet with a sufficient return. The hotels and drinking establishments, however, did a roaring trade. This is a thirsty generation, and the beverages in vogue are not those recommended by the Total Abstinence Society. In this respect, the provision made in Melbourne is quite astonishing. In some quarters of London gin palaces are thick; my recollections of Hamburg are, that in certain streets every other establishment was a *café* or *gasthaus*; in the Bowery, New York, lager-beer cellars are numerous; but, in proportion to the population, I should imagine that in Melbourne there are more licensed drinking places than in any other large city in the world. In these, on the eve of the Cup Day, our country cousin was very conspicuous. The places of amusement were crowded, the presence of the trio of Governors at the Academy of Music attracting the upper ten thousand—or rather five hundred—of the colony. But the Theatre Royal, Opera House, and St. George's Hall were equally attractive; and the Circus, the Boxing Match at the Princess's Theatre, and Mr. Roberts's billiard-playing, "fetched" the less artistic and more sporting of the visitors. At the Albion, Goyder's, Garton's, and Tattersall's, the conversation was all

about the Cup, and the "great pot" upset by the defeat of Newminster. In "the rooms" there was, so to speak, joy in Israel, the settling over the Derby putting thousands in the pockets of the members of the ring. Newminster, three days ago the hope of the backers and the feared of the layers of odds, the "grandest horse ever foaled in Australia," was now scorned by everyone—none would do him reverence. Mr. Frank Dakin sustained a great deal of chaff. The fact of his tasting every drop of water before the horse drank was now held to be a capital joke. The revolver and bull-dog business was excellent fooling. Mr. Graham Mitchell was jubilant. Never mind, Mr. Dakin, you did your work well; caution is always praiseworthy in a trainer, and you know your world. However, I was sorry to hear loudly-uttered suspicions by many outsiders of the good faith of late transactions at Point Cook. One gentleman from the country was very irate. "All that rot about the horse being poisoned, and the pistol business," said he, "I don't believe in it. The stable knew the horse had gone amiss, and they kept up all that secrecy, deceiving the public. Fools went on backing him, and the stable 'got out,' and didn't lose so much after all. The public suffers, as usual." Now, I cannot say that I believe this; still I know that, in England, many like transactions have happened. It is one example of the ethics of the ring; and an instance of the decadence of the standard of honour induced by that institution which I have before lamented. If Sir Hercules Robinson can purify the Turf of New South Wales, he will do a far greater work than the useful sanitary exploit of his namesake.

As the night wore on the places of amusement disgorged their thousands, and everywhere there was a rush to the bars. Hansom cabs rattled up Collins-street to the club, which pre-

sented an unwonted lively appearance. Waiters and Hebes put on many airs, and would scarcely deign to serve any one who had not the appearance of "a squatter," owning a few million sheep. I am afraid that, on the whole, Melbourne was not a moral city on Monday night. Certain supper-rooms, and the "saddling-paddocks" and the vestibules of the theatres, were crowded. The bars in these latter were open until midnight, the "paddocks" having put on fresh paint for the occasion. Many gentlemen explored the purlieus of Little Bourke-street, the Chinese quarter being quite a mine of wealth to certain police officers and detectives during the Cup week. I received a written invitation to join one of these parties, a dubious sort of compliment. At most of the principal hotels betting and drinking went on until a late hour in the morning, but wise men retired to bed early. Walking homeward along Bourke-street, I saw many sights which it is prudent not to record here. It is well that, after midnight, the proceedings of many of our country cousins should be carefully veiled. I am sure they will suffer enough from the amount of abominable drink they have concealed; why should I moralize over them?

#### THE GRAND STAND AND LAWN.

I went down to Flemington by the first train, getting through without much crushing. The rail seems highly popular with many fine ladies, as they thereby escape the dust nuisance on the road; and yesterday there was a fair amount of dust, even for Victoria. The railway arrangements in connexion with the Hill and Grand Stand are very good, and the Course itself fulfils the mission for which Nature evidently intended it. It is, however, a great pity that, for the sake of the sightseers on



the Hill, the Stand has been so lamentably dwarfed. It is a fine Stand, no doubt, and you can see all round the Course from its lowest seats, but the low roof makes the atmosphere close and stifling. Many times yesterday I was glad to escape on to the Hill for a breath of fresh air, where I got more than I wanted, mixed with dust. Until the races commenced, the chief amusement consisted in watching the arrival of the vehicles, fours-in-hand, drags, &c. The road to Flemington is a bad one for any great display; and one of the principal enjoyments in connexion with the English Derby is therefore missing here. In spite, too, of this being such an essentially horsey community, I was disappointed in the number and quality of the teams. I missed the drags of "the Guards" and other crack regiments, which bowl so merrily along, and form such important adjuncts in the show on the road and Course at Epsom. I have seen a far better display of horses and vehicles at a small meeting at Jerome Park, New York. Here the rail takes thousands who, in England, would probably drive down. But the human show was a great one. In spite of a gloomy morning, the Grand Stand was early thronged with all the fashion and beauty, and a good deal of the intelligence, of the colonies. I never expect to see a finer sight in Australia. One above the other the tiers of seats were filled with the youth and loveliness of the land. Young and old, beautiful and—otherwise, they were all magnificently dressed, their garments elegant in themselves, and in many cases set off by the charming figures they covered. The present style of fashion does not go in for concealment; why should it? There is really something morally exhilarating in being amongst a well-dressed throng; and I think that the consciousness of a faultless attire ought to keep the wearer from many temptations. The male companions

of the gorgeous creatures on the Stand were, if not supremely graceful, I hope gallant. Colonial gentlemen do not, as a rule, dress too well, and any taste is all on the side of the fairer sex. Representatives of all Australia and its aristocracy were present, the "vice-regal party" arriving in carriages drawn by four horses, and preceded by outriders. There were Sir George Bowen and Miss Bowen, Sir Hercules and Lady Robinson and Miss Robinson, Sir Anthony and Lady Musgrave, Captain and Mrs. St. John, Major Pitt, Captain Musgrave, and the Hon. Hely Hutchinson. A fair and gallant company indeed. I quailed before three Governors and Knights; the benignant smile of Sir George would be quite enough to settle me. But Victorians, I begin to see, are a democratic and irreverent race, and, except from a society and fashionable point of view, have little respect for the Queen's viceregerents.

Squatters from Riverina and Queensland, Sydney millionaires, Adelaide merchants, and everyone worth knowing in Victoria, seemed to be on the Stand. Professional men, scholars and quacks, lawyers and divines, statesmen and politicians, popular singers, actors, actresses, circus people, agents, publicans, and trades folks, all were there, an incongruous medley. "New chums" were astonished at finding any fashion out of London; and even our cousin from San Francisco was forced to admit that the sight was a grand one. Between the races the male portion of the crowd found business below, where a succession of bars, presided over by a scratch team of maidens, offered inducements to assuage thirst. It was here that friendly "sweeps" were arranged by many who deserted their fair partners to bet with those of their own sex—who pay when they lose. I heard one ungallant young man say, "It isn't a good line betting with a girl, or putting money in a 'sweep' for

her. You stand to lose every way." In the saddling-paddock, another long bar added to the extraordinary amount of refreshment accommodation provided. Along the side of the wall the shed was generally crowded with curious inspectors of horse-flesh, the saddling, rubbing down, or removal of plates by a blacksmith being all watched as intently as a religious ceremony. And when a favourite was being walked about the grass, what a crowd collected, and how hot were the disputes as to its points and fitness, which would be settled in a few minutes. In this enclosure every male on the Stand would take a turn, and mingle with jockeys, trainers, and betting men. The committee of the V.R.C. have wisely kept select the ground between the Stand and the Course, which, in England, would have been turned into a betting ring, and the layers of odds have to content themselves with the saddling-paddock. They are there removed from immediate association with the Stand, and ladies escape the disagreeable infliction of being forced to overlook the blackguardly babel which often goes on. Here were the "leviathans" of the Ring, clad in "purple and fine linen," diamonds glistening in their shirt bosoms and on their fingers. These are all great men, my masters; some of them own racehorses, and win races, and are looked upon with awe by the smaller fry who bet on the Hill. In justice to these gentlemen, let it be said that some of the non-professional owners of racehorses are also reputed to be shady, one wealthy man being pointed out to me as "an old lag"—whatever that may be. Strange cries issue from this throng:—"I'll lay on the Cup." "I'll back the field." "I'll lay on the Cup an' Durdle." This last cry puzzled me a good deal, till I discovered it meant the Cup and Hurdle races. Little circles were formed round the layers of odds—friendly satellites, holding umbrellas

—which served the double purpose of keeping off the sun and dust and attracting backers.

The obnoxiously dazzling white cemented walk in front of the Stand, which, next year, Mr. Bagot tells me, will be covered with a Brussels carpet, was, between the races, crowded with promenaders; the general practice being to take a turn in front of the vice-regal box before going on to the lawn. Locomotion was difficult. Nothing like that at Goodwood; still this serves the same purpose, the display of the ladies' toilettes. If these looked lovely on the Stand, they were ten times more so on the lawn. The gently swaying undulations of the female form displayed the costumes to advantage. Again, the present style is, to my mind, in moderation, a graceful one. It is the poetry of suggestion. Still "pullbacks" do not suit every one, and many do not know how properly to carry themselves in such attire. There are dangers to be avoided in posing. Victorian ladies cannot do better than study Mrs. Scott-Siddons, who is a queen in the art of dressing and its management, and who was noticeable for the simplicity and elegance of her costume. I wish I could thoroughly describe the dresses; they were wonderful in colour, material, and make. Solomon, in all his barbaric glory, would have stood a poor show on the lawn at Flemington. Every combination of colour was present, there being a particular run upon, light blue, the delicate maize tints which I love so much, chocolates, browns, and echrus. The mazarin blues, French greys, lilacs, cerise, plum, and pure white, singly, or combined, were great favourites. Styles of *coiffure* and of head-dress were various. I don't know much about millinery, but one Gainsborough hat—or its owner—fetched me considerably. All *bien ganté* and shod à *merveille* (but I am transgressing), with trains sweeping the grass

in graceful curves, the *tout ensemble* left little to be desired. The misadventure at Galle had certainly no perceptible effect in diminishing the splendour of this gorgeous exhibition. I am told that, owing to the threatening aspect of the weather, many of the most valuable costumes were not sported; but there was quite sufficient to enchant me. You might perchance have seen as much richness and elegance at Longchamps in the palmy days of the Empire, and now in some respects a select garden party in London might be equal to it. But for a great *al fresco* gathering of beautifully dressed women, I know nothing in the world to equal the lawn at Flemington on a Cup Day. Depths of colour and striking contrasts can be worn by Australian ladies, being in harmony with Nature here. They are equal to American girls in this. Now, if I have made a mess in "sketching the drapery," I don't know if I shall be more successful in "filling in the flesh tints." I consider Australian girls some of the most beautiful in the world, not even excepting Americans. And nowhere will you find more beauty than during the season at Saratoga, Newport, or Longbranch (the latter place rather "shoddy" no doubt); or, in the late Fall, at four of the afternoon, on the Block between Madison and Union squares. There is a certain young English gentleman, something in the millionaire and sheep-owning business, I believe, whom I met on the Stand at Flemington, he not knowing me, whom, not many years back, I "ran around" New York for a few days. Now he is a great traveller, and had been in Melbourne and seen the Cup before; but he declared to me that the New York girls went ahead of anything he had ever seen. He was in love fifty times a day, and vowed he would marry none but a Yankee lass. I wonder if he will keep his word. The world is such a small place after

all ; I little thought then that we should meet in Melbourne. I think he was wrong. Distance never lends enchantment to my view, but I really believe that Australian beauties are superior to the American in one respect ; they show more like real, live, healthy flesh and blood. I am only judging of Victorians. I have heard that in New South Wales and Queensland ladies are thin, pale, and indolent, as in India. But on the lawn yesterday, there was beauty, youth, health, energy, vitality. An anatomist might have found the fault of their being often a little too fine drawn in the waist ; but that, alas ! is universal in civilized (?) countries.

I have before mentioned the strange mixture on the Stand ; the lawn is quite as respectable as that at Goodwood, but decidedly not so select. Publicans' wives and barmaids—and I have not a word to say against these ; they, no doubt, are as good as the rest—would not have the *entrée* there. I do not know if there is a *crème de la crème* of Victorian society—if the colony is yet old enough for that. I do not mean those who are invited to Government House, which is a pretty general passport, for even in England there are people who say “the Queen's set are not the thing ;” and in the States, President Grant's bosom friends and companions would certainly not be received into the families of the Astors, Van Raesselters, Stuyvesants, Livingstones, and other representatives of the Knickerbockers. Anyhow, I suppose the cream of society was on the lawn yesterday, although perhaps, pretty considerably diluted. I surely saw some signs of “shoddy,” and amongst all the elegantly-dressed and beautiful women I have been gushing about, there were vulgar ostentatious somebodies and nobodies. *Of course*, however, they were in a minority. If the lawn was surrounded by trees and shrubs, which

would break the storms of dust, it would be quite a pleasant promenade. However, it performs its purpose, and serves as a show ground for those engaged in the Maiden Stakes. Beauty must be fed, and Messrs. Pickersgill and Miller had charge of the luncheon rooms in the basement, and satisfied many hundreds in the course of the day. I was informed there were over 20,000 people on the Stand and Paddock. Many of these, however, brought luncheon hampers with them, and held *reunions* in their vehicles, a much more sociable and, in every respect, pleasanter way than feeding amongst the crowd downstairs. Not but that the luncheon and liquors were good enough, but everything was rushed too soon, and, what I have often noticed in Victoria, the staff of waiters was not large enough. When I went down I caught a waiter near me, and gave him a shilling and an order. I never saw the man again, and had to struggle for comestibles in a manner I detest, generally getting what I didn't want. I was brought up to be waited upon, and like to have several niggers hanging round loose at my beck and call. In their carriages, too, many venerable citizens and wise ones of the land had private stores of curious brands of French liquors, to which they introduced their friends. Some old gentlemen, I believe, would have preferred to sit in their carriages all day long, bottle in hand, discouraging wisdom to the stranger.

#### THE HILL.

I took several walks on the Hill, which is a far better stand for viewing the races than the "cowshed" below. It was like an ant-hill, surging over with waves of pleasure-seeking humanity, all well-dressed, comfortable-looking, and happy.

There was little difference in social position between many here and some on the stand ; but from the prosperous shop-keeper to the mechanic, all had one jolly, contented, and dusty look. For the dust was something to experience. If the clouds, which were blown threateningly across the sky, had opened into one smart shower, it would have been hailed by many as a relief, although it might have spoiled a few dresses. On the Hill there is the same wonderful provision for supplying a thirsty public. I believe that, altogether, the committee of the V.R.C. have erected a mile of counters, and in time Mr. Bagot hopes to run these all round the Course, making Flemington one great open-air bar, at which, once a year, all Australia may come and drink. For the present lines of counter are not sufficient, and tents and booths are erected on the Hill, supplying hungry and thirsty souls. The crush here was enormous. On the slope, people at first picniced on the grass, with umbrellas shielding them from dust and wind ; but, as the day wore on, there was barely standing room for those in front, and locomotion became everywhere difficult. Looking at this vast crowd, and at the thousands on the course—the latter, however, seeming but a handful to the numbers I have seen at Epsom, Newmarket, Doncaster, or Chester—I began to think that the following saying was not so extravagant :—“ Everybody in Melbourne goes to the Cup, and the majority to the Hill ; there’s nobody left in town but a few paralyzed old men at the Benevolent Asylum and hospitals.” People rashly estimate the numbers on the Hill at from forty to fifty thousand. I suppose the former is about the mark, as the space is not a very large one. There was a highly respectable element on the Hill, and there was also a highly disreputable element. Phryne, Lais, Aspasia, and sisterhood blazed in satins and



silks, sporting the colours of their favourites. They appear to enjoy themselves. Swindlers and welchers of all kinds were there—the parasites of the ring. Arrayed in calico jackets of many colours, these called the odds, or got up “sham sweeps.” Looking at these one could say, “A little while back and Thompson the Mighty was as one of these. Great is the mystery of laying odds.” Other men, *bonâ fide* book-makers, did a good business, generally, I found, laying a point or two below those quoted in the ring below, with which they appeared to have some mysterious connection. Our old friend from the Eastern Market was there, initiating our country cousins into the mystery of the purse trick. Talent and hard work will, in time, no doubt, secure him a moderate competency. He is an artist in his line, and deserves supporting. The nonchalant manner in which he spins ten half-crowns into a purse, and then, throwing it on the ground, defies any one to buy it, is immense. Should a bystander attempt so to do, however, it is always “sold to a gentleman as spoke ’afore you.” But he doesn’t leave the purse long on the ground—he will pick it up and turn out the contents, and our country cousin thinks what a fool he was not to buy it. Then, again, he apparently fills it with half-crowns, not this time spinning them, but holding them between finger and thumb, and placing his hand over the mouth of the purse, into which the penny concealed in his palm is dropped. What becomes of the half-crown, you ask. I know, but you must find out for yourselves. Our country cousin, who then gives half-a-crown for a two-penny purse and six coppers, is well sold. However, it is a cheap bargain, if he will accept the lesson and warning. Let him learn that, in this world, one must give value for value, work or money for money, and that we

cannot buy sovereigns with half-crowns. At least it should be so ; but with the prosperous examples of moneyed rascality going around, it is useless my preaching this sermon. Still, however, in their way, they worked for their pelf.

Our market friend had imitators, men who do like tricks with coins wrapped in pieces of paper, but they are bunglers alongside of him. The old English sport of throwing a ring on to some iron spikes driven in the ground had also a precarious support. In a remote corner I came across a gang of rascals doing the "three-card monte" trick. "Wheels of fortune" attracted many customers. But there was not so much of this as on an English racecourse. The thousands here came out to eat, drink, see the running, and generally enjoy themselves. I hope they fulfilled the programme satisfactorily. I daresay many of them, being colonials, would not mind the dust, which was the principal element in my discomfort. In some parts of the Hill early visitors formed in rings, and ate *al fresco* luncheons. One could recognize the London shopkeeper and his family. He doubtless, on Saturday night, instructed his better-half to "boil a bit of bacon or a tongue, for Tuesday," with recollections of outings at Greenwich, Hampstead Heath, or Bushey Park. I am afraid that, yesterday, these picnics were not very successful. The number of private sweepstakes was wonderful ; I believe every unit on the Hill was in a sweep for each race. I was solicited by a group I was standing near to join their sweep. Of course, I consented, though neither there nor in any gambling transaction below was I more successful than in the "art-unions" at Emerald Hill. Amongst the group was an old Irish gentleman, whom I once met before in the gallery of the House. He was very polite to me, and pointed out things, but had a decided down

on Victorian aristocracy. "D'ye see them all down there with their silks and their trains? Well, ye'd never think that half of them never had a grandfather." "Good heavens, sir! You don't say so?" said I, with strange thoughts of the origin of species flitting across my brain. I know that we are supposed to be descended from marsupials, but could kangaroos, in three generations, have evolved into such lovely beings? Looking down at the lawn, the horrible suspicion flashed across my mind that those tall, slim, graceful forms, with flowing trains, had a sort of kangaroo loop—— "I mean, ye know, they'd no grandfather socially, and presume they'd progenitors, but devilish few grandfathers," said my friend. My mind was relieved, and he went on, "Me own grandfather owned twelve baronies and fifteen townships, but the Union ruined us, sir. I remember the time, though, when I drove my own tame down to Punchestown—d'ye know Punchestown?" I said I was there in 1870 with Mr. Pigot. "Were ye, now?"—and my delighted Irish friend dragged me off to take some whisky, and we drank "God save Ireland," and confusion to the Saxon. From the Hill the view of the Course and people was a splendid one, a halo of dust being over all. The upturned faces of the throng would have been white with expectation, but that they were red with dust and heat. The two miserable gum-trees were crowded with boys who had scaled this coign of vantage. But for the dust and the crowd, the Hill is far preferable to the "cow-shed," which was stuffy, hot, and uncomfortable yesterday.

At four o'clock I returned to the Stand. The horses were saddled, preliminary canters had taken place, and the thirty-three competitors were started from "the straight." As they swept past the Stand the sight was a beautiful one. Round

again, murmurs, cries, a thundering rush, and Briseis, ridden apparently by a child, is the winner of the double event—the Derby and Cup. The result, in spite of the dubious morality of the scratching of Rapid Bay, appeared to be popular. Shouts and hurrahs were heard, hats thrown in the air, and one excited individual fell on his back in the attempt to turn a somersault. The boy who rode was carried around the paddock, and was the hero of the day. In the midst of all this I slipped out, and took the first train back to Melbourne, thankful to say that not one instance of intoxication or disturbance fell under my notice. Every one enjoyed themselves good-humouredly. So mote it ever be.

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### SETTLING DAY.

AFTER the wild enjoyment of a race meeting, there comes to many a period of lamentation and woe. "Settling Day" in England has been the starting-point to bankruptcy and exile of several peers of the realm and other great ones of the earth. Occasionally, too, a bookmaker gets hard hit, and cannot meet his obligations, or finds that parting with so much money is too great a strain on his honesty. Little mercy is shown to him by the authorities—he is posted as a defaulter, and at all race meetings is denied admission to the ring. He may howl himself hoarse amongst the mob of "welchers" and small list-keepers outside, but the magic circle is a paradise from which he is expelled for ever. In Victoria, happily, no great fortunes have been wrecked, nor honoured names dragged through the mire of ruined reputations by losses on the turf. No Hamilton, Newcastle, or Hastings has been compelled to depart the

country, leaving his estates in the hands of "commissioners." These ghouls of the Turf, who pick clean the bones of the bodies left by the bookmakers, are not yet an institution in Australia. No Guardsman, burdened with debt, who has sought to retrieve his fortunes by plunging heavily on "a certainty," finds himself compelled, according to his code of honour, to wipe out his liabilities, and obtain a discharge in full by the aid of pistol or poison. I am glad to find that suicides in consequence of Turf losses are almost unknown here. Yet the "settling day" after "the Cup" was anything but a joyful occasion to the majority interested in the result of the late races. The layers of odds had been almost universally successful, and the backers lost heavily. In the duel between the bookmakers and the owners of horses, the former, as usual, were conquerors. The outside public, of course, suffered severely—winners were as scarce as honesty.

On Monday night I roamed about amongst the sporting throng. Goyder's, the hostelry owned by a popular commission agent and betting man, was well crowded; at the Bull and Mouth there was some business done, but the principal rush was at "the Rooms" of the Victorian Tattersall's in Bourke-street. During the race week, indeed at most times, the pavement in front of the Prince of Wales' Hotel and Opera House is crowded at night, with the same obstruction to traffic and nuisance to the general public as in day-time in Collins-street "Under the Verandah." And many of the same faces, too, are there, the owners having apparently taken up free selections of several yards of pavement at both places. Both in Bourke and Collins streets, I think, this nuisance ought to be done away with; neither stock-jobbers nor betting men should be allowed to obstruct the public thoroughfares. But Victorian

police do not understand how to keep a crowd moving. I daresay Captain Standish has been in Paris in his time, and perchance received the polite but firm order, "*Circulez, s'il vous plait M'sieur.*" We want a little of that here. It was lucky that the Opera House was not open on Monday night, for the crowd surged over the pavement for a considerable distance up and down Bourke-street, and would have been a great annoyance to the Theatre-goers. But the Vestibule was, of course, open, and the bars and paddock therein were doing as brisk a trade as on ordinary nights, the *habitués* thereof showing conclusively for whose benefit these institutions are run—decidedly not for the use of the attendants at the Theatre. In the rooms upstairs there was a great throng, all the mighty ones of the ring busy settling their accounts, receiving and paying money. It was mostly, however, receiving. Speculation on future events, the Ballarat Races and Champion Meeting, was rife. "I'll lay 100 to 10," shouted a gentleman whose lungs had been early hardened by crying "Murray cod." The odds were jubilantly shouted by the bookmakers, enriched and emboldened by their late victory. "We're always right," said one prominent individual; "it's always three to one against anything." The history of the principal men pointed out to me is stranger than any fiction. Bookmaking has raised them from the lowly—but honest—occupations of crying fish or boot-blackings, to rank amongst the wealthiest of the land. Some who erstwhile had their place amongst the outcasts of society, and were tried for swindling at the little game of "three-up," now clothed in fine raiment, owners of race-horses, and denizens of "princely establishments," rule the ring, and consider themselves fit associates for "gentlemen." The virtues of poverty, hard work, and honesty are ridiculous

trifles in comparison with such a career. Yet one thing these men cannot obtain—that is, the respect of the world. Their own class may look up to them and admire them ; but it is merely for their success and superior villainy. Gay men about town may fraternize with them, and say, “ — is not a bad fellow, after all.” Publicans and sinners adore their lavishness : but society, as a rule, is down upon them, and perhaps often too harshly so—endowing them with an amount of rascality they do not often *practise*. *Par exemple*, there were to be found thousands of people in Victoria who declared that, but for the precautions of Mr. Frank Dakin, Newminster would have been “got at,” and even now there are many who persist in the assertion that the above equine fraud was poisoned. On Monday night one young squatter loudly asserted that such was the case. “When he came out I knew he had been got at,” said he ; “his eye and his coat showed that they’d given him a small dose of antimony, just enough to put him amiss for the day.” I suppose such foolish statements originated the reports in the country press that the horse had been poisoned. I myself don’t believe the members of the ring ever attempted such a proceeding—it could not be done safely. Besides, they ought to have known what I did—that the horse simply was not good enough to win the Derby or Cup.

Flowing over from the rooms, into the bars, on to the stairs, and thronging every place down below—bookmakers, squatters, clerks, professionals, publicans, and the general *oi polloi* of a racing crowd, mingled together. The sporting barber from Brunswick-street was there, settling his book with his commission agent. The oyster-man from Bourke-street and the clothier from Elizabeth-street were squaring the amounts they had “laid off.” There was a strong Eastern element. One

of my best friends in the world, if he's still living, comes from Jerusalem, and no slur is meant upon his race or religion when I chronicle the remark of an irreverent American with whom I exchanged courtesies (?) on Monday night :—" Moses and Company," said he, " don't want to go back to Judea, not much—they wouldn't do it. Their latest revelation is that Australia is the real Promised Land." I think there's a spice of truth in this remark. For myself, I prefer the Yarra to the Jordan. The amount of drink consumed was enormous. This is, indeed, a betting and a thirsty generation, and soda and brandy was certainly necessary to wash down the flavour of so much stifling humanity. Everyone I met seemed to have lost, Newminster being the principal cause. One gentleman, however, amused me much by his asseveration :—" Well, I lost, certainly ; but I wasn't such a fool as to come from Sydney to back a horse no one knew anything about. Dakin's a very good fellow, but I want a professional to train the horse I put money on, not a gentleman. Tocal was the winner, but for his temper ; didn't *The Argus* ' Vagabond ' say so ? " " Who is ' The Vagabond ? ' " asked one of his companions. " There's only one man knows him —— " said a well-known bookmaker. A wave of thirsty souls separated me from the group, and I could not hear who the " one man " was. I fancy I know, however, and, if he " gives me away " to the Ring, the retribution will be a heavy one. He knows his obligation. I heard of one rich young gentleman from St. Kilda winning a pile over the Steeplechase on Saturday. Such is fate—I lost all my ventures on that day. However, I was pleased to hear that a cabman won £400 in Miller's sweepstake. I trust he will invest it, and never bet again. I was amused to hear of the fabulous sums which would



have been won by many if certain "doubles" had come off. This form of betting is peculiar to Australia. A well-known bookmaker went to England some time back (I met him, I believe, at Warwick races), and tried to introduce the system there, but it did not work. It is hazardous enough to back one horse for one race, but to back two coupled for two different events seems to me about as even a thing as a Chinese lottery. However, I suppose "doubles" are pulled off sometimes, but the speculation in such is a great source of revenue to the ring.

The rooms were crowded until late, then by degrees the company dispersed. In quiet parlours "chicken hazard" and "Yankee grab" were indulged in, but of that more anon. From all that I saw and heard, I am happy to think that, generally, people have not lost more than they could afford. Many will have to curtail their luxuries for a time: it will be a lesson to them. Betting appears to be the natural accompaniment of every sport and play, and, as the Rev. W. P. Pearce, of South Yarra, so ably and eloquently pointed out to the three Governors, these are the glorious heritage of every Australian, and, taken in moderation, are beneficial to the individual and to society.

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## RAGGED SCHOOLS.

### THE SECULAR.

"KNOWLEDGE decreases crime, reduces taxes, improves labour, increases the value of property, and elevates the whole community." A well-known American writer says so, and I believe it all. The latter propositions are seldom disputed, but the

former is the bone of contention, forming "the religious difficulty" in the education question both here and in England. The religious party say that it is not only as regards the scholar's welfare in another place, but for his own benefit and the present safety of society, that daily he should be taught a certain number of texts, and listen to the history of Hebrew kings, and be prayed and preached to according to the lights of the particular sect or creed into whose hands he may have fallen. Without the exposition of their interpretation of the child's duty towards God and his neighbour, all other learning they hold is as naught, and knowledge, unless sanctified by daily religious instruction, is "godless," and does not decrease crime. The arguments of some would even go to prove that it has quite a contrary effect, and that the best educated communities are the most criminal. The Church of Rome, at one time the foster-mother of learning and the fine arts—keeping these, however, mostly to herself, and adapting them to her views—does not appear to greatly encourage the acquisition of "general knowledge" amongst the masses. I may be wrong; but I speak from experience of Roman Catholic countries, both in the Old and New World, and neither *monsieur le prêtre* in France, nor *el padre* in Spain or South America, ever seemed to me particularly anxious to teach children more than their duty towards the Church. The Church of England, as well as that of Rome, is equally opposed to State education without her assistance; and many other denominations think that they also ought to have a finger in the pie. National and secular education has indeed many enemies, who all dispute that knowledge *per se* decreases crime. I think it does. Has not every one in his circle of acquaintances several without a particle of religious feeling or general morality, who, if it had not been for

their education, and the position, associations, and tastes made and formed thereby, would be rather dangerous members of society? I have, and should, I daresay, have been one myself, if I had been chucked out into the world without the knowledge of reading and writing, and the power of comparing good and evil, which education gives me. The old adage is true, "When fortune's gone and money spent, then learning is most excellent," not only because it enables one to keep the wolf from the door, but that it also keeps away the temptations to crime, which an uneducated brain must and does feel. I think that the learned, as well as the rich, have a better chance of heaven—that is, looking at their overt acts, sins of omission and commission to society. This is hard on the poor and ignorant; but so.

This seems an impeachment of the poor, but it is the state of ignorance I would arraign—with that go poverty and crime. Lessen ignorance, and I believe you will lessen both. To my mind it seems almost absurd to offer any proofs of this; but as there are people, good and conscientious, but bigoted, who believe that this colony is drifting to perdition because the State will not allow the churches to meddle in its business, I will tell them a few things. It is scarcely fair to compare one country with another—Spain with England, or Mexico with the United States—so I will only refer to the Anglo-Saxon countries, not wishing to take undue advantage by putting these in contrast with the ignorant, blood-thirsty, priest-ridden, communities. I speak now from my own knowledge when I state that, in the calendar of the assize courts throughout England, at least 75 per cent. of the prisoners are returned as ignorant. Some "cannot read or write" at all, some may be just "able to read, but not write," others "can read and write a little."

Very few indeed are ever returned as educated. In my vagabond wanderings through the United Kingdom, and attendance at many assizes, nothing struck me more than the lamentable fact that the majority of the offences against the person, and of robberies, &c., accompanied with violence, were committed by totally ignorant men. In all branches of crime the disproportion, relatively to the population in England, between ignorance and education, is to me a plain proof that knowledge *does* diminish crime there. Of course the natural man will break out at times, and will overpower all controlling education and associations: but these are extreme cases. The late lamented William Palmer, of Rugeley, one of the most genial sportsmen I ever met, was an educated professional man, and used his vast knowledge of toxicology to remove obstructing relations in such a manner that, to this day, the profession is divided as to what was the agent used. But education certainly did not make Palmer a murderer, although it pointed out the means; and if, instead of wasting his time on the Turf, he had followed the pursuit of professional knowledge, he might now be an honoured light and an authority in medicine. In the United States, the proportion of educated and ignorant criminals can, perhaps, be fixed with greater certainty than in England. In those States where the public school system is in full force, crime is at a discount, and in the large cities the majority of criminals are furnished from the ignorant immigrant class and their children. The Northern States have always been flooded by foreign poverty and crime, which swell up the statistics of the large cities. I care not of what nationality or creed these immigrants may be—that does not affect my theory. New York, which has become odious for municipal corruptions and frauds, has not had to thank native

Americans or the State School for such. William M. Tweed, the "Boss"; Jimmy O'Brien, ex-sheriff of New York, formerly of the Penitentiary, Blackwell's Island; Conolly, and the rest of the Tammany gang, were Irishmen and Roman Catholics, who gave largely to the Church and its charities. I am sorry, but it is so. For the sake of my argument, and to spare the feelings of my *confrères* in the gallery of the House, I would just as soon say they were Scotch and Presbyterians, but I must adhere to the truth. They were all ignorant men, some of them unable to sign their names; yet, by the aid of the votes of others as ignorant, but not so cunning, they robbed the city of millions of dollars. Mr. Hawkins, whose dictum heads this article, says:—"There are only seven per cent. of the population of New England uneducated, and this seven per cent. furnish eighty per cent. of the criminal population." Now, rabid Secesher though I was, I believe this. I have travelled far and wide in America; have lived, loved, and fought in all parts, East, West, North, and South, and I can always recognize the hall-mark of the State School upon the community where it is established.

But even in the United States the State School system has some enemies, all, however, "down South," whose plausible theories may furnish arguments and find supporters here. They compare Northern and Southern illiteracy with Northern and Southern crime, and attempt to prove that in the South ignorance and virtue went hand in hand, whilst knowledge and crime were synonymous terms in the North. The foremost and most celebrated of these critics is my old friend, the Rev. Randolph L. Dabney, D.D., professor and principal of the Union Theological Seminary, situated at Hampden-Sidney, near the Court-house of Prince Edward, county Virginia. Now,

Dr. Dabney is a scholarly gentleman, of rare attainments, but as a clergyman he is of the Church militant. He has the blood of chivalrous cavaliers in his veins, and his heart is in his State, and opposed to the reconstruction of the peculiar institutions formerly prevalent "in Dixie." When the war broke out he joined the army, and served on Stonewall-Jackson's staff as quartermaster-general. His affection for his chief was unbounded, and he has since written the life, a glowing eulogy, of that able general and noble man. A high-toned Southern gentleman and hospitable host is Dr. Dabney. I have been his guest, and experienced all the charm of his intellectual conversation. We had much in common ; but still, on the public school question, I am forced to admit that his testimony isn't worth a cent. First because it is of the North, and Dr. Dabney has not "accepted the situation," but hates the North and its institutions worse than Lucifer. Second, the "Civil Rights Bill" establishes perfect equality in schools, churches, theatres, and railroad cars, and if State Schools become an institution in the South, the negro boy may sit down at the desk by the side of the heir to valueless acres and princely blood. This is an abomination in the nostrils of our professor, who is already burdened with a negro representative in the State Legislature ; and so he takes up his pen to prove that the system is all wrong, and a vicious one—trying, however, a side issue, being too wise to state his real objections. In 1850, Dr. Dabney says, the Northern States, which had all adopted the State School system, had, after allowing for the difference of population, more than six times as many criminals as the "uneducated" South. In the same year "the North was supporting 114,700 paupers, and the South 20,500. Indeed," adds Dr. Dabney, "it requires nothing but the evidence of one's own eyes to convince any

observer that the economical plea of State Schools is a delusion. In the South State schoolhouses were unknown, and, consequently, gaols and penitentiaries were on the most confined and humble scale. The North, studded over with costly public schools, is also covered with gaols even more 'palatial' in extent, and nearly as numerous."

Now this is very special pleading, and the futility of it is apparent to any one who knows anything of America. In 1850 slavery was a ruling institution, and in the South the ignorant class was the negro, although some of the "mean whites" in the Carolinas were almost as bad in that respect. Every planter exercised patriarchal justice on his own estate, and punished as he thought fit, consequently four millions of people gave no return to criminal statistics. The ruling class, the whites, many of them, especially in Virginia, highly educated, and a very small percentage ignorant or poor, could have little temptation or predilection for criminal offences, although duelling, "shooting cases," and other little eccentricities of the hot Southern blood, were passed lightly over, which, in the North would have helped to swell the criminal records. So Dr. Dabney's comparison is worthless. If he had taken 1870, and proved that the ignorant black, free to follow the impulses of his own nature, with no strong law or overseer's whip to restrain him, is less criminal than the State-school-educated Northerner, he would have made out a case, but he knows that it is not so. National education is a necessity in any country where universal suffrage is prevalent, and the evils engendered in the Southern States by sudden emancipation will be partly cured when the negro—what is left of him—is educated.

Having thus proved to my own satisfaction, and I trust to that of some of my readers, that knowledge does, or at least

has a tendency to, decrease crime, its particular application brings me to my subject of "Ragged Schools." If education, either with or without religious instruction, has the moral influence claimed for it, society and the State are bound to bring its influences home to the lowest and most degraded class, and to do this properly it seems to me that there must be some slight modification or alteration of existing State systems. The Ragged Schools of London have done good work ; but the religious element is prominent there, and that, in this paper, I am entirely leaving out, although I shall consider it hereafter. This article deals with the "Godless" system of educating "gutter children," at the expense of the State. In the large cities of the United States this difficulty has been experienced. Education there is not compulsory, and children of this class will not attend the ordinary State Schools. In New York, there is a great difference between the Greenwich-street School and the high-toned establishment in Twenty-sixth-street. The code of instruction at both is the same, the teachers of the same class ; but in Greenwich-street we find the children of poor, and sometimes dishonest parents, whilst at the up-town establishment the dress and manner of the pupils suggests the superior intelligence and wealth of their relatives. But the ordinary system of State education seems repulsive to many little outcasts, and such schools as those in Greenwich-street too respectable ; and these children will not be thoroughly reached till the State makes special provision for their benefit. Private philanthropy has done somewhat ; Mrs. Astor, at her own cost, maintained a Ragged School, I believe, in Eleventh-street ; and the Children's Aid Society has done more. This latter is an admirable institution, and the secretary (Mr. Charles Loring Brace) is a gentleman of high literary attain-



ments, who has devoted his life to the work. I have had many interesting conversations with him on social topics, and remember reading with great pleasure his work, "The Dangerous Classes of New York," of which I hope Sir Redmond Barry has obtained a copy. It contains many valuable ideas on problems which here, as in America, are rapidly developing themselves, and demand our immediate care. For although the extreme poor are not with us, as in overcrowded cities of the Old and New Worlds, still daily the youthful criminal and dangerous class is increasing, and every effort should be made to stop its further progress. Education, I believe, will do much, and the establishment of a State School in O'Brien-lane, off Little Bourke-street, was a step in the right direction—an invasion of the headquarters of Melbourne vice and crime. This more than any other of the kind in Melbourne bears resemblance to the popular idea of a "Ragged School," although conducted thoroughly on the State system, and without the religious element present in London and New York. It is held in the building belonging to the Gospel Hall Mission, which I have before referred to, and respecting the school wrote :—"Coming from the old country it seems strange to see the well-fed healthy appearance of the children in such a neighbourhood as this. I could hardly believe that the children in this school were recruited from the worst quarter of Melbourne." After a second visit I do not feel inclined to alter the above statement ; nothing surprises me more than the above fact in connexion with our "gutter snipes."

There has been so much talk lately about Ragged Schools and education, "godless" and otherwise, that, the other day, I thought I would go and thoroughly inspect the workings of this institution, where endeavour is being made to reclaim, without

the aid of the Churches, the little waifs of this city ; so I solicited the services of my friend Mr. Hill, the police court missionary, to introduce me without my object being known. I find that I am getting a very unenviable reputation amongst civil servants, and to obtain the truth I have to travel under the disguise of mediocre respectability, and not as a vagabond. Nature has aided me in this endeavour, and no one could be more unconscious of my identity than Mr. Ellis, the teacher, who kindly showed us everything, and volunteered the remark that "if the 'Vagabond' was to come round here he'd get a fine study of character." We arrived at the school at two o'clock, and found all voices joining in the chorus of "Silver Threads," the accompaniment being played by the young lady assistant, Miss Hutton, on the harmonium. There is a good deal of coarseness and vulgarity appertaining to the "minstrel" business, but one thing is certain, that Christy—if such a person ever existed—and his followers have inculcated a popular taste for a far higher grade of music than that supplied by English music-halls ; and in that the American imitators (?) of the negro and his melody have not lived in vain. There were about 100 girls and boys present, of all ages, from three to fifteen years. The average attendance is over 120, but on this day (Wednesday) many children were absent, selling in the market. Friday is another day on which many children are kept away from school, sent gathering wood, &c., by their guardians ; and every afternoon a number of boys leave at half-past two, to obtain the first instalment of the *Herald*, which they sell in the streets. Partly for their sake the school is opened in the afternoon half-an-hour earlier than the usual time. The room is rather dingy and dirty, the only ornaments a few maps ; but the children, seated on forms, sang

heartily and merrily, and appeared to thoroughly relish the music. After "Silver Threads" was finished, a boy of about twelve was called out to sing the solo of the "Little Crossing Sweep." His name was John Stanley. He had only one hand, but a magnificent voice, and would have made a good chorister. The other children joined in the chorus with a will. Then some girls sang "Little Sister's Gone to Sleep" in a very affecting manner. The music and singing were altogether good, and the children seemed to enjoy them and to appreciate the sentiments of the songs, and I cannot but think that they did them some good. It is true that Mr. Bret Harte has delighted to delineate a Californian gambler as revelling not only in sentimental, but in religious music; still, Jack Hamlin at the bottom was not a bad sort of a fellow, and was made what he was by the exigencies of life amongst the Argonauts of the Pacific Slope. I think most of the readers of *The Australasian* have a sneaking fondness for Jack; and it is certain that a taste for good music is not a distinguishing trait of the Melbourne larrikin; and the encouragement of such taste amongst these poor children cannot, I think, but be beneficial. The conclusion of the musical performance was the singing of a verse in very "pigeon" English by a little half-caste Chinese boy, five years of age. He was well clothed in a knickerbocker suit, and when Mr. Ellis perched him on the desk he laughed and crowed with joy, and no one would have thought that he was the Ginx's baby of the establishment.

This is the history of Master William Ah Sing. His father is a Celestial, his mother from the Emerald Isle. It is uncertain as to whether their union was blessed by priest or bonze, but the result is the merry little chap before us. He took his father's name, Ah Sing, to which his mother added

William, or Billy, for the sake of distinction. The father, at one time a wealthy man, lost money in gambling, and took to evil courses and opium; his mother took to drink. The downward career of Ah Sing was rapid, and in time the boy's mother abandoned him and her child. All his life the boy had been sadly neglected, varied by occasional active ill-treatment, and now he seemed in danger of perishing outright from cold and hunger. But even in the foul alleys and rights-of-way out of Little Bourke-street human nature is not quite dead, and little Billy Ah Sing received kindnesses of a precarious nature from many who would not be considered highly respectable by church-goers. The other day the teacher, Mr. Ellis, prowling around in search of prey—young children whom he might snatch up and carry away to be devoured by the "godless" monster, State instruction—came on the child, half-starved, dirty, and miserable, clad only in a shirt. He ascertained that the father would be glad to be relieved of the nominal control of his child, and then took little Billy off to Mr. Ah Goon. This gentleman appears to be a sort of Chinese Jack Hamlin. By profession he is a gambler, great in lottery shops and the fan-tan game. He is reputed to be a wealthy man, is generally considered a good fellow, and is the legal owner of a gorgeous Caucasian wife. He, however, is childless, and has a love for male children, so Mr. Ellis soon persuaded him to adopt Billy Ah Sing; and that young gentleman's lines have now fallen into comparatively pleasant places. Billy is one of sixteen Chinese half-caste children now at the school. These are scattered all about in the classes—amongst Anglo-Saxons and Celts. The Chinese children are, as a rule, the best dressed and cared for, and are decidedly the smartest. Their heathen parents appear to take pleasure in availing themselves of the Education Act,

and send the children to school at a very early age. Here, *par exemple*, are the two Masters Hang Hai, aged four and six years respectively. The youngest has one of the finest heads I have seen for a long time, and is very precocious. When Miss Hutton takes charge of the junior class, containing about thirty children, and, giving a slate to each scholar, makes a series of figures on the blackboard, which they have to copy, Master Hang Hai commences displaying his skill by filling up his slate with a quantity of hieroglyphics, which he triumphantly shows to me. In return, he wishes to see what I have got in my note-book. Before I left I was on quite intimate terms with this young gentleman; when I returned to his class he saluted me with a friendly nod of recognition, and playfully shook Miss Hutton's cane at me. He had possessed himself of this instrument of tuition, and was banging the blackboard with it, evidently, in his own mind, "bossing" the class—together a most humorous young customer. The children are rather of mixed appearance. They are mostly cleanly; some of the girls are very pretty. Here is a beautiful Irish child side by side with a young Australian, who has disfigured herself by "banging" her hair in imitation of some frail sister residing in these purlieus. The majority are of poor but dishonest parents, although some are respectable in their connections. Many of these infants are not untainted with crime. Here is Master "Mouchy" who has been twice before Mr. Sturt, on clear charges of larceny; and the last time, for stealing a meer-schaum pipe, was begged off by Mr. Ellis; and I was witness of an inquiry into the conduct of a boy charged by another with fowl-stealing. He had been away from school in the morning, passing the time in chicken larceny, and when asked by Mr. Ellis where he had been, he shamelessly replied, "Please, sir,

having my hair cut." Now, as his matted locks hung down his back, this was a strong assertion. Then the inquiry commenced, and it seemed to me would terminate in a case of not proven. "A man gie me the fowl to sell," said the boy, "I was goin' down the street, and he see me——" "He saw me," corrected Mr. Ellis, evidently determined that, whatever this boy's moral turpitude, he should be grammatically correct. "He told me to sell it for eighteen-pence, and I did, and gied 'im the money." The other boys evidently thought this story rather "thin," and laughed at it, and all the children seemed to take this charge as a very common one, and not particularly interesting.

If the young St. Giles of Melbourne here present bears little resemblance to his brother in London, it is, at first, because he is better fed, and, secondly, better clothed. But in many cases the latter is due to the exertions of the teacher, Mr. Ellis. Many parents made an excuse that their children could not attend school on account of want of sufficient clothing, and Mr. Ellis has accordingly appealed in every possible way to the charitably disposed for left-off children's clothing. To a certain extent his appeal has been responded to, and he has been enabled to make his scholars both decent and respectable. I only saw one boy with bare feet. Still, supplies of clothing are always wanted, and on behalf of these little ones I appeal to the wealthy to spare them a little of their abundance. Parcels of clothes, and second-hand tale-books, and toys discarded from the nursery, may be addressed to Mr. Ellis, Gospel-hall State School. It is my own thought to beg for toys, which I am sure would be a great joy to these poor waifs. A few books have already been sent to Mr. Ellis, but they are mostly of a class entirely unsuited for these children. *The Memoirs of*

*Hedley Vicars* is scarcely adapted to their intelligence; and many other more simple books which were shown me contained religious dogmas and teaching which would frighten the parents of Catholic children, and cause them to be removed from the school; for I am glad to say that many Catholic children are present here. Mr. John Duffy may be surprised to learn that these formed 60 per cent. of the scholars. Lately, many have been removed by the priests, who appear to have had a sudden fit of energy in looking up the stray sheep of their flock. Some of these will drift back here again, their parents being satisfied that no attempt to tamper with their religious faith will be made. The conductors of the Gospel-hall Mission, however, are about to start a religious meeting, after school hours each day, for such children as they can secure. This being a private building, only rented by the State, after or before school-time it may be used for any purpose compatible with its object. I think myself it would be much better if a school-house was built in this neighbourhood. There is plenty of ground about there, if it could be procured, and it is highly desirable to have the schoolhouse, baths, and playground altogether. The latter is a great desideratum, as at present the children have to play in the rights-of-way, and get scattered about during recess. The master, young lady assistant, and one pupil teacher have quite enough to do to look after the children at this school. The duties are heavy, and the mode of instruction is necessarily sometimes rough. The ordinary State School *curriculum* is carried out, which, for these children, I think might be greatly improved by the Pestalozzian system of object lessons. The three Rs, with grammar, geography, needlework for the girls, and singing, form the course of instruction, and these youngsters appeared

to me to have quite as good a chance of learning these thoroughly as I had. I like Mr. Ellis's manner in tuition. With a large map of Europe before them, he put the senior class through what they knew about Russia, and they had a very respectable knowledge. Explaining to them the large watersheds and tributaries of the great rivers, he brought it home by exemplifying the gutters running through the streets into the central drains, and thence to the river; and he further compared the length and size of Australian rivers with those in Europe. It was amusing to me to hear the children repeat the names. "What lake is near St. Petersburg?" is asked one. "Ladoga" is the reply. "Now, then, all together!" "Ladoga!" they all scream, dinning the information into each other's ears in a manner calculated to fix it in their memories. It may be pointed out that this study of geography will not influence the soul or heart, but to my mind it is part of the system of acquiring knowledge which must discipline and expand the mind, and in the long run make the child a better citizen, besides being highly advantageous to himself. Taking into consideration all the difficulties they have to contend with, the progress made by the scholars is very creditable to the teachers, and the inspector has reported favourably thereof.

Mr. Ellis is a young man, smart-looking, in appearance not at all like the popular idea of a school teacher, but I think he is in the right place. To the children he is kind and familiar, yet firm. The cane is not brought into request too often, but I suppose it is sometimes needed here, although I strongly object to any flogging in schools. But I am very pleased to say that I heard no harsh word pass the teacher's lips. He was severe in tone sometimes, but gave utterance to no expression



unbecoming a gentleman, or which might not in reproof be applied to any gentleman's son. Mr. Ellis performs the duties both of master and "truant officer." In the byeways, brothels, and opium dens of this quarter he daily searches for children, and every afternoon looks up truants at their homes. His energy has been rewarded, and he is now trusted both by the children and their parents. After school hours I went round with him to see the houses of some of his scholars. Everywhere he was received on familiar and friendly terms, and the Chinese parents of children seemed particularly pleased to see him. He has quite an extensive knowledge of the inhabitants of this unsavoury neighbourhood, and introduced me to some queer cribs. William Ah Sing's father lives in a broken down shed built over a closet, for which he pays 5s. a week. It was without furniture, all the money he can get being spent in opium. Afterwards we went to see Mr. Ah Goon, who had adopted little Billy. This celebrated gambler lives in a brick house, comparatively well furnished, and generally ornamented by the presence of his splendid possession, Mrs. Ah Goon, seated on the step. This young lady is a good-looking Australian, clothed in gorgeous robes and much jewellery. Her husband is a spare, pleasing-looking Celestial, who, when he smiles, seems very intelligent. Has any one noticed the difference a smile makes in a Chinaman's face? I was glad to shake hands with him, and he was much pleased when I talked about the boy. I don't think, however, that little Billy will have the best of times with his adopted stepmother. We visited several other places inhabited by Chinamen and their European wives and offspring. This mixture of the races appears to be looked upon with great charity by Little Bourke-street, and the children resulting from

such unions are generally strong, healthy, and intelligent-looking; and, as a rule, the Chinese are very good to their Caucasian wives and children.

Altogether, I was very pleased with my visit to the Gospel-hall State School, which I have taken as an example—the only one in Victoria—of a “Ragged School” conducted without any religious teaching. I trust I have said nothing against such teaching, but I have been endeavouring to show that, in spite of its absence, education has some sort of moral effect upon children, and that knowledge does decrease crime. I believe these children are rendered morally better by attendance at, and the discipline of, the school. The music cultivates their tastes, and the course of tuition expands their minds, evidently rendering them more fit to receive any religious instruction which the city missionaries, ministers, or priests may give them. That is the affair of their guardians—the said instructors—and not of the State, which has plainly said that it will look after the minds, while the Churches must attend to the souls, of the rising generation. If we admit—and I think few reasonable people will deny it—that in this country of democratic institutions and manhood suffrage it is even more important that our rulers should be educated than the governed masses of the old world, it is certain that the only way to properly do so is through the State Schools—secular and compulsory. The admission of religious teaching on the part of any one sect or creed into these institutions is an affront and insult to the others. All contribute alike for their support through taxation, and all—Heathen Chinese, Catholic, Presbyterian, or Atheist—have a right to an equal amount of mental education for their children. In such a neighbourhood as that surrounding the Gospel-hall School, where so many conflicting social elements reside, the

religious question must be very jealously excluded from the State Schools. I imagine, too, that modification of the mode of tuition, hours, &c., might in such neighbourhoods be usefully left to the discretion of the teacher or the board of advice. One thing is certain—the teachers at such schools have hard, unthankful, unrecognized work to perform, for which they require special qualities, and should receive special remuneration. In the United States teachers of the primary classes receive higher salaries than those of the superior grade, it being wisely considered that it requires a far higher order of intelligence and command of temper to break in a child's intellect than to merely direct the same afterwards. This theory applies with double force to Ragged Schools. I am always in favour of retrenchment by economy of administration, but in some cases—of which this is one—niggardliness to *employés* proves destructive to the permanent interests of the community.

#### THE RELIGIOUS.

“The primary object of these schools shall be the gathering in and instructing in the Word of God destitute children, for whom no other means of instruction are available.” This is the first rule and key-note of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association—the religious method, as opposed to the “godless system of State instruction” for “gutter children.” This Association was founded in 1862 on the death of Mrs. Hornbrook, a venerable lady who held neither her time nor her comfort dear unto her in the good work she first started, of gathering together children from the lowest class of the population, who but for these schools, had *then* no other future but a career of ignorance and vice. At the end of the first year of the opera-

tions of the Association ten schools were opened—five situated in Collingwood, two in Little Bourke-street, one in Little Lonsdale-street, and two in Prahran,—being planted in what were supposed to be the most populous and destitute localities. In a few years' time the number of these schools increased to twelve, with a total of 1,000 children on the roll. Each school was worked independently by a small committee of ladies, who provided the funds necessary for its maintenance, visited the school periodically, and exercised a general superintendence over the teacher. The central committee kept a watchful eye on each school; prevented the local committees from infringing the articles of association; and collected funds, which were distributed according to need, or devoted to the opening of new schools, or the acquirement of school buildings. It was generally admitted that the secular instruction was necessarily and "*designedly*" (I quote from one of the reports) very elementary, attention being principally directed to having the children thoroughly instructed in the Word of God (the translation of James I., and not the Douay one), and trained to habits of cleanliness, order, and industry. There was, however, no sectarianism allowed in the administration of the Hornbrook Schools, and on the different committees ladies, members of the Church of England, Presbyterians, Baptists, Wesleyans, Independents, and Plymouth Sisters—all worked together amicably. From the first Miss Fraser, a noble-hearted lady, who worthily bears the mantle of Mrs. Hornbrook, has been the honorary secretary of the association, and Lady M'Culloch has long been president, and efficiently helped in the good cause. For some years the local committees worked energetically, and in every report the association claimed to be performing a great work amongst the juvenile criminal and vagrant

classes. I have no doubt of this ; every species of education I believe to be good, although perchance much training may be thrown away or misapplied. It is certain that the "designedly" small modicum of secular instruction was not thrown away in every case : indeed, I am told that a successful dentist in town received his only education in a Hornbrook School ; and the amount of Bible knowledge imparted, which must have been rather staggering to an ordinary mortal, was, perchance, effective. Looking at the number of larrikins of both sexes who now haunt the streets of Melbourne, I cannot help wishing that, ten years ago, the Hornbrook Association had been enabled to extend its sphere of operation a hundredfold, and that the present rising generation of vice might have felt the effects of its teachings. A mocking spirit within me suggests that perhaps some of these juveniles did. *Retro Sathanas !*

The last report of the Association, however, dismally laments that they have now only five schools in operation—two in Little Lonsdale-street, two in Collingwood, and one in Prahran. This the committee attempt to account for, and attack the present State School system in the following paragraph of their report :—

"The committee trust that they may be able to keep up these their five remaining schools, for they feel that they are being driven out of the field by a system which practically ignores the class for whose benefit, it might be supposed, free education was mainly intended. It is well known that, in our present costly system of State education, the 'arabs' have neither part nor lot, nor does there seem to be room in our State Schools for the children of a numerous class of even tolerably respectable parents who are either too poor or too careless to seek for their children the blessings of education. Of this class the Horn-

brook Ragged School Association had, at one time, in their schools, nearly a thousand children—gathered mainly from the streets and lanes of the city. These have, to a large extent, drifted away from them; but they are not to be found in the State Schools, and never will be, until they are compelled to come in. The alarming increase of juvenile crime, lawlessness, and insubordination in our community attests the urgent necessity existing for some measure which will make such children sharers in the bountiful provision made by the State for secular education, to which there should surely be added, in their case, the further benefit of moral and religious training. To combine the two has been the great aim of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association; and it is with a feeling of extreme regret that they see the work taken out of their hands and practically left undone.”

I can understand that, in many cases, the State School is now doing what the Hornbrook Schools did before; but I cannot see that, in ignoring the class of “street arabs” or “gutter children,” the State School system is driving the religious one out of the field. If the State takes no heed of these, all the more reason that an association, founded expressly for that purpose, should be able to reach them. An interview with Miss Fraser—to whom I am indebted for information kindly given me on this subject—did not help to solve the mystery of the fact of children drifting away from the Hornbrook Schools, and still not attending State Schools. I found out, however, that the great falling-off in the amount of subscriptions had much to do with this. People who formerly subscribed to the Hornbrook Schools now say, “There is a State School a hundred yards from yours—why should we maintain both?” and they are right; every child should attend

the State School. But, as the report says, until they are compelled, all will not do so. Still I cannot think that, through the extension of the State School system, many children are now left uneducated who would have been formerly reached by the Hornbrook Association. In many cases, where their schools have been given up, it appears to me that the policy of State education has been vindicated—the religious school could not exist side by side with the secular one. If the latter has not as yet gathered in all that it should, the work of the Hornbrook Association is to glean what is left, according to its programme—attacking vice and crime in their strongholds, and not lament that a certain amount of work is being taken out of its hands.

Is this now being done? To answer this thoroughly I have paid visits to all the schools now owned by the Association, and have endeavoured to arrive at the truth according to my lights. I would bless if I could, for I recognize and sympathize with the spirit which animates the officers and the ladies of the committees. Many of these, I am afraid, will think I deal harshly with their Association; but the truth must be told. From visits and inquiries made, not only in the neighbourhood of the present schools, but of those which have lapsed, it appears to me that the objects of the Association have been defeated, or at least that any great result is *now* being frustrated through the prominence given to the religious part of the programme. The Hornbrook Schools have been Bible Schools, not Ragged Schools in the true sense of the word: many of them, it seems to me, never had the slightest claim to that title. The Association, instead of concentrating its forces in the plague spots of the city, encouraged the formation of a network of daily Sunday Schools around Melbourne; and, consequently, when a State

Schoolhouse was built, the higher education given there caused parents to remove their children from institutions where the boys, at least, learnt little else but texts. A Sunday School once a week, I believe, is sufficient for most children; a daily Sunday School, when any other educational establishment is available, is decidedly behind the age. "The designedly" small amount of secular education given at their schools accounts, I believe, for the present state of the Association, at least as regards the attendance of children. With respect to the closing of many of the schools, it seems to me that the interest displayed by many ladies of the different committees was spasmodic and uncertain. Animated by a sudden glow of religious charity, many rushed into the scheme, eager to gather to the fold of Bible instruction every child in their districts. Committees would be formed, presidents, and secretaries, and treasurers appointed, and for a time the management of the schools afforded a new amusement. But by-and-by it began to grow stale, and the interest flagged. The counter-attractions of the world and the flesh—milliners and matrimony—prevailed. Many of the schools, too, being governed by ladies living in an entirely different district, there was a want of local interest in them, and they were only taken up as the charitable amusement of the moment. This, I understand, to be one cause of the failure of some of them. Of those which have survived, the ladies composing the local as well as the general committee are to be praised for their long persevering efforts in the cause which they think just.

I paid my first visit to the School in Little Lonsdale-street west. This is held in a building belonging to the adjacent Independent Church, for which a rental of £39 a year is paid.



All the other school buildings are owned by the Association. I found thirty-two children present, the number on the roll being fifty-one, their ages ranging from four to twelve. They seemed of a little superior class to those at the Gospel-hall State School. There were no Chinese half-castes, no young thieves, or newspaper hawkers. Their clothes were mostly comfortable, only two being barefooted, James and Peter Ramsay. These two lads had been, according to the statement of the teacher, Mrs. Rishton, turned out of St. John's State School on account of their lack of clothing. This is a scandalous shame, and in this case at least the Hornbrook School did good work. From inquiries as to the parentage of the children, I found that some of these at least might perchance be held to be members of the class for which the Association was founded, although none of them were of the low grade of Little Bourke-street. The little girls were sewing, the boys doing sums. Needlework and patchwork appear to be the most useful things taught at these schools; as the boys don't learn such, their attention is concentrated on texts. Hung round the walls there are many pious devices, which, like the religious teaching, are supposed to be entirely unsectarian. Bible instruction and hymns form a large portion of the *curriculum*. From a Protestant point of view, the Scriptures cannot be converted into anything sectarian; but how as to hymns? I have two such specimens before me now. One, Calvinistic, gloats over the torments of lost souls, and describes how "Justice has built a dismal hell." The other, one of the most beautiful lyrical confessions of faith ever penned, ends with "Hold thou the cross before my closing eyes." These don't fit in together. I can foresee that difficulties may have arisen amongst the ladies of the different committees on the religious question. The

teachers, also, sometimes display too much zeal in their religious instruction. I have heard of the introduction of the 'Church of England Catechism, but any such vagaries are promptly suppressed by the hon. secretary. The idea of the Association is to leave the child in a state as well adapted for one Christian creed as another. Does not a secular State School also do this? Several of the children present were of Roman Catholic parentage, although they often come with instructions not to read "the Book," which, after all, I must admit, is not quite milk for babes. A teacher's life amongst such a lot of juvenile larrikins is not quite a bed of roses, and Mrs. Rishton complained much of the annoyances she experienced by the stone-throwing propensities of the outside barbarians. Even as she spoke to me several stones were banged against the door—the protest of Little Lonsdale-street against Bible-teaching. I was wrath, and said to myself, "I will stop this for a time ;" so, suddenly opening the door, I marched out, stick in hand, prepared to administer condign punishment to the offenders. Behold, there was only one small boy, about six years of age, a well-dressed little urchin, decidedly not of the larrikin breed. He burst out into a frightful howl when he saw me, and attempted to escape ; but I caught him, and gave him a good lecture, telling him a truthful story of a little boy who threw stones at the school-house door, and ended in being a member of the Legislative Assembly. That frightened him.

I next took train for the pleasant suburb of Prahran. Walking around this township, it seemed the last place in the world where one would meet with "street Arabs." The cottage gardens were pleasant with the bloom of fruits and flowers. I could see no indications of squalor or vice. Eastbourne-street is a pleasant locality, where I would not mind living. I had

asked many people where the "Ragged School" was, but could obtain no information ; but at last I struck it myself, in the shape of a red brick building, bearing the inscription "Scripture Reading School." Mrs. Brown, the teacher, was unfortunately away, but I was shown round the place by an intelligent young person, who was very enthusiastic about the good done by Scripture reading. This is the best building owned by the association, and in every respect the best school, which arises from the fact that the committee of ladies reside in the district. The school-room itself is cheerful, with texts such as "Let the Scriptures be the foundation of all instruction," and prints of the heroes of the Old Testament. I was glad to see a large doll's house and other toys. In all the Hornbrook Schools it is the practice to devote a certain afternoon in the week to play, this being a reward of good boys and girls. This school is well off for toys. Some little gardens outside, small selections, about a yard square, are given as prizes to the boys to cultivate. There is a very fair library of tale books, which are lent out from the Friday till the Monday, and a pile of patchwork and old clothes, which I saw being re-made into children's garments. Little girls are taught to make their own garments, which are then sold to them for a few pence each, which sum goes towards paying for needles and cotton. The principle, however, of making the child independent and above charity is always inculcated in the Hornbrook Schools, and at each of the schools there is a fiction of selling garments for a trifling sum, to preserve this idea. There is no doubt that, at these schools, the girls are likely to learn more useful work than at the State Schools, and one of the foremost rules of the Association appears to be well carried out. In every respect the Prahran School seemed

equal to any ordinary public school in Australia, England, or America. With the exception of the re-made piles of clothes, there was nothing at all suggestive of raggedness about it. I asked my *cicerone*, "What class of children attend this school?" She had the answer glib—"Oh, all gutter children, sir!" "What do you mean by gutter children?" "Oh, children of poor people, who play about in the gutter." I afterwards walked about Prahran, interviewed several policemen and other citizens, and, from all I could see and hear, the Eastbourne-street School is a capital institution, as what it hails to be—a "Scripture Reading School," but has no more claim to be called a "Ragged School" than the Scotch College has.

Rokeby-street, Collingwood, is not a savoury locality, and it is the residence of a good many of the roughest of Mr. Langridge's constituents. The school-house here is a dingy wooden building, bearing the name of "Bible School." The children here seemed to me to be exactly of the same class as those to be met with at the adjacent State School. They were all well clothed, and, the teacher told me, were the children of working people. Nothing of the "street arab" or "gutter-snipe" about them. Here there was the same amount of texts and needlework, the foundation of the Hornbrook system of education. A few minutes' walk across the Flats brought me to Sydney-street, where there is a nice little brick building, attended by some twenty-five children. One little girl, with a precocious knowledge of the power of her charms, made eyes at me, and was evidently highly delighted at the presence of a visitor to break the tedium of the afternoon. This seemed a well-managed little school, the children being of respectable parentage. Harmsworth-street, parallel with

Sydney-street, contains the newly-opened Children's Church, a building erected by the Association out of funds collected to erect a Hornbrook School in Smith-street, Collingwood, but which was rendered unnecessary by the opening of additional State Schools in that neighbourhood. The services there are of the simple kind suited, as far as such can be suited, to the intelligence of children. The good little children of Collingwood Flat will, no doubt, be collected there; but I myself would rather see such a building in Little Bourke-street. The last school which I visited was the one in Cumberland-place, off Little Lonsdale-street east. As elsewhere, on asking for the Ragged School, I had a difficulty in finding this. Some children, however, at last discovered that I meant the school they attended, and marched me to the building, and introduced me to the teacher. The schoolhouse is an ordinary red brick building, the whole ground floor being converted into a schoolroom, the teacher's quarters being above. There was nothing in this school to distinguish it from the rest. There were the usual texts on the wall, and piles of needlework, of which I began to get rather tired. Although this is just on the outskirts of a rather bad quarter, the immediate neighbourhood is a good one, and the scholars, I was told, were the children of working people. They were of all ages, from three to fifteen, and of all sects, even including Jews and Roman Catholics. As an example of the strange manner in which the local committees of the Hornbrook Schools are formed, one of the principal ladies managing the establishment in Little Lonsdale-street resides in Prahran. To counterbalance this, however, the Sydney-street School in Collingwood is efficiently managed by ladies from Collins-street.

The good work which the Hornbrook Association did in the first ten years of its existence appears to be now principally taken out of its hands by the extension of the State School system. At this we should rejoice. The system of instruction and management appears to be that of the old "dame school," combined with a goodly amount of Scripture teaching. The features of this which I like best are the facilities given for cleanliness, the recognition of the need of amusement by the introduction of toys, and the yearly treat to the children. The latter, I think, might be made a feature of each State School. But as the present schools of the Hornbrook Association now exist, they cannot be called "ragged," but are mere religious ones. Unsectarian they certainly are; but still the pervading spirit is, unintentionally, perhaps, as hostile to the State School system as that manifested by the Catholic Church, and without the same show of reason. *Extra cathedram nulla salus est* is the motto of the Church of Rome, and its teachers work up to that principle. The Hornbrook Association is worked on the idea that, without a certain amount of Scripture teaching, education is of no avail. The fact, too, that they have deserted the worst portion of the town—that Little Bourke-street and its purlieus are abandoned by them—is rather an argument against the prosperity of any great social work carried on entirely by committees of ladies. If a Ragged School is wanted anywhere; if the avowed objects of this association should anywhere be able to benefit the community, it is in Little Bourke-street. Yet the Gospel-hall, which it once rented, is now given over to the "godless" State School. Still, if, as the report of the association says, the State School is not efficiently doing the work of reclaiming gutter children, there is

yet time for a change of front. A Hornbrook School may be started in the worst portion of Little Bourke-street, and the experiment made as to the comparative merits of religious and State instruction. In any case, I would advise the Association to concentrate its forces in the head-quarters of Melbourne vice and crime. There is little need for Collins-street ladies to go to Prahran and Collingwood when the work lies at their back doors. If, as I imagine, the Association will shortly find that its day is gone by, that with national and compulsory State education "Scripture Schools" are behind the age, it may still usefully supplement the workings of State Schools. Committees of ladies may still take certain districts, and, visiting the poorest class, may gather to themselves a little flock of children whom they may out of school hours advise, influence, read Scripture to, and treat, endeavouring as far as possible to counteract vicious home influences. Mrs. William Astor, of New York, first gathered together such little waifs in her own mansion. Victor Hugo's dinners to and *réunions* of poor children at Hauteville have brought down on his head many blessings from the islanders of Guernsey, who don't know anything about his poetry. Mr. George Dawson, of Birmingham, followed M. Hugo's plan with success. I can see in the future wider scope and better work for the ladies of the Hornbrook Association than the present mere playing at administering instruction to children who are not "ragged." They have taken up the burden of the revered lady whose name they perpetuate. Much of the work which she proposed is now rendered unnecessary; but unless they would fall out of the race—the struggle to do good in their day—the whole present system of the Association must be changed. "The act of the present generation is the germ which may and must produce good or evil fruit in a far distant

time. Together with the seed of a mere temporary crop, which mortals term expediency, they inevitably sow the acorns of a more enduring growth, which may darkly overshadow their posterity."

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### THE MAGDALEN ASYLUM.

THIS article is not written for boys and girls. I intend to call a spade a spade, and not an agricultural implement. The "unco' guid," who have been reviling me for the last two months because I advocated Sunday excursions for the people, will, no doubt, be highly shocked at my manner of speaking of fallen women. I give them fair warning, and they had better pass. The social evil is, I believe, as strong in Melbourne as in any city of the world; and it is flaunted boldly and shamelessly in the face of society. Added to this, there is a general public immorality as glaring as that of Paris under the Empire, without the refinement of French vice. For graver sins, the coroners and members of the medical profession can vouch. Human nature seems particularly strong in Australia, and respectable society is full of "whited sepulchres." In a lower social stage there is not even a pretence of keeping virtuous. Girls "go wrong" with their eyes open; and it is useless to gush over them. Some time back, I wrote—"The state of morality amongst the working-girls in Melbourne is worse than in Paris, and they commence their downward career earlier. Work-room and shop recruit the ranks of the unfortunate. Work makes the hands black, and does not always keep the reputation white. They are led astray by a love of fine clothes and admiration,



coupled with early-developed strong passions; and their fall is not purified by the ghost of love—love which is the essence of the life of a *grisette*. The Melbourne Magdalen goes her way wilfully, and of her own accord. She has no shame in her wrong-doing, and false sentimentality should not be wasted upon her.” I do not see any reason to alter this statement. But immorality alone does not make what is generally known as a “fallen woman.” I know that very good people—principally those of milk-and-water temperaments—hold that the slightest *discovered* breach of society’s moral code makes a woman “fallen,” and one to be shunned by her sex, and socially outlawed. Man does not usually condemn the offender; woman alone, forgetting what was written by His finger on the dust of the Temple pavement, casts stones at her erring sister. And this want of charity too often drives a weak girl into the ranks of the unfortunate and the outcast. Man’s wayward passion may bring some to ruin, but woman’s anger and venom too often complete the work. A strange instance of this came under my notice the other night.

I was wandering late in West Melbourne, when I was accosted in the dreary gay tones of a female outcast. Men of the world are used to this sort of thing; it neither shocks nor surprises us, and I was passing without heed when the gleams of the gas lamp fell upon the face of the speaker. I was certainly startled, for a countenance picturing more young, innocent purity, I have seldom seen. “How long have you been at this game, my child?” “Three days, sir,” was the answer. “And do you know what this will end in: have you no idea of anything better for your life than this?” I asked. The girl burst out crying—“Oh God! I wish I was dead, sir. Oh! if I could only get something to do. But my mother turned me

out of doors, and I had to come to the streets." The grief seemed genuine, and it touched me. A good dinner and copious libations of Bourbon whisky had perhaps obscured my intelligence ; at least, I felt charitable, and inclined to play the Samaritan. The girl's story was soon told. She had been a barmaid, had been tempted, and had gone "crooked ;" the child was dead, but her mother, enraged by neighbours' sneers, had turned her out of doors. She was not what chapel people would call a good girl, nor particularly clear on the moral code ; but her true womanly instinct, not yet lost, revolted at the abominations of her trade. "Oh ! if I could only get a situation, and get away from this sort of life," sobbed the girl. Worldly wisdom told me that this very likely was "a put-up game," and that I was a fool to waste my time listening to the complaints of a young hussy. But Bourbon whisky, warming the cockles of my heart, told me that the story might be true, and that as a "Vagabond" I was bound to test it. I took out my notebook and wrote down the address of her mother, and promised the girl that, if what she said was true, I would get her a situation. Through the kindness of the public in buying up the first series of *The Vagabond Papers*, I had a few shillings in my pocket ; so giving the girl money, I told her to go to her lodgings, and stop there till she heard from me. "If you go outside the door, or don't keep quite straight, I shall hear of it, and nothing will be done for you," said I, austerely. "I'm only too glad to keep off the streets, sir. Are you a magistrate, sir ?" I intimated in a severe tone that I was something in that line, and the girl crept away to her dismal lodging, whilst I walked towards the Eastern-hill, thinking what a particularly thundering fool I was, and vowing in the future not to take more than five glasses of Bourbon after dining at the White Hart.

I woke in the morning with a headache, and a disagreeable impression that I had undertaken a duty. (I hate duties!) Like the Rev. Julian Gray, I had a new Magdalen on my hands. Mine, however, was not repentant, in the religious sense, and she was not interesting and accomplished like Mercy Merrick. She, although pretty, was simply a foolish child, not depraved at heart as yet, a type of hundreds going to the devil in Melbourne. "Bother the girl," I said whilst dressing, "why couldn't she keep out of my way?" However, I had passed my word, and I was curious to see if her tale was true, so I called at her mother's address. It was quite correct; the mother was a "respectable" woman, keeping a shop. Yes, her daughter had "gone wrong," and the neighbours talked about it. Her presence at home was a disgrace, and there was a young sister growing up. It is true they had a row, and she told Annie to clear out. She could not be disgraced with her in the house any longer. She had made her bed, and must lie in it. Thus said the mother. I spoke a few plain truths to that lady, which I am afraid only made her more bitter against her daughter. "I suppose you're one of her gentlemen, come here to gammon me to keep her for you," said the woman, fring up. Indignant, I left; but a few moments after I had a hearty laugh at my own foolishness, and I felt that I deserved all I got. "Whatever foolish people may say, I must keep my own self-respect in this case," said I, and so I enlisted the services of a good, charitable lady, a friend of mine, to call on my new *protégée*. She went, and came back highly indignant. The girl was a wicked little thing; she wasn't penitent a bit, and wouldn't listen to any prayers. "She got quite impertinent at last, and said she was only civil because she thought I was your mother, Mr. Vagabond."

Here was a pretty state of things. My new Magdalen was going it with a vengeance. "I wouldn't trouble my head about it any more," said Mrs. —. "Madame," said I, "you know me; I'm a particularly bad egg. I drink, and smoke, and go down the Bay on a Sunday. I've no morals nor character—nary shred. *Vide* the religious newspapers. I'm a champion liar. I can look one clean in the eyes, and deny him ten times thrice, and nothing brings compunction to me. But I never yet promised a thing to a man or woman and broke my word. I'm going to get that girl a situation, though I wish she was at the bottom of the Red Sea." Following out this line, I had to make influence amongst my connections. I have an extensive acquaintance, from the highest in the land to a convicted thief in Little Bourke-street. I set to work, and in two days got a situation as waitress and barmaid at a country tavern for my *protégée*. I went and saw the mother again, and persuaded her to give her daughter a small outfit, and see her off by the train. This is some weeks back, and I hear the girl is doing well and giving satisfaction, and she may live to be a happy wife and mother. I never saw her after the first time I met her; and hope I shall never hear of her again, as I find the new Magdalen of fact remarkably troublesome.

Why spin this long tedious yarn? Well, only to show how the forces of society work against the weak, and as an example of how many stray ones there are who, with a little charitable feeling, may be kept from sinking lower, and, warned by the past, may keep straight for the future. For the few days that I had this girl on my mind, I had thought of persuading her to go to the Magdalen Asylum. I did not know anything about that institution, although from the lady superior, Miss Curtain, I had received a very kind invitation (which I did not

deserve) to visit it. But I concluded rightly that it must be intended for the reception of women fallen to the very lowest depths, whom a long course of discipline and work would alone reclaim to the right path, and make useful members of society. There are gradations even in vice, and such a girl as the one I have described would have been degraded and made worse by association with the female ghouls of Little Bourke-street and its purlieus. These latter are a great sore, scandal, and evil to society, and if they can be aroused to repentance and reform, a moral and social benefit will be effected. This is entirely apart from the religious question. I was satisfied in my own mind that the Magdalen Asylum at Abbotsford, under the direction of the nuns of the Good Shepherd, was doing good work; although I have heard of wealthy bigots who refuse to give subscriptions to the institution because "it is conducted by Roman Catholics." I think the readers of *The Argus* are well satisfied that I am no friend to the Church of Rome, and that any compliments I may pay to the nuns at Abbotsford are forced from me by admiration of the true spirit of Christian charity with which they go about their work. To me it matters not if they are Catholics, Jews, infidels, or heretics. To comfort the sick, to raise up the fallen, are Heaven-ordained duties, superior to all petty distinctions of sect or creed. If people would only bear this in mind, the world would be happier and better. It was with this thought in my heart that, the other afternoon, I took cab to Abbotsford. I suppose this was originally christened by some "kindly Scot" anxious to perpetuate under the Southern Cross memories of the Wizard of the North. The Convent of the Good Shepherd is situated on the south side of Johnston-street, the Yarra forming an irregular boundary around two sides, it

being walled in on the others. Knocking at the door, the little-barred window therein is opened, and a female face, bandaged and hooded in white serge, appears thereat. "Can I see Miss Curtain?" I ask. "Who is that?" "Miss Curtain." "Do you mean the Reverend Mother?" Reproved, I confess that I wish to see the "Reverend Mother," and I am at once admitted. My first glance is towards the door. I see that inside it is not locked, and that it is possible during the day for anyone to get out without troubling the sister who acts as janitor, and that in this respect liberty of action is not controlled.

Many good Protestants believe that a Convent is a place of locks, and bolts, and bars; of *oubliettes* and dreary cells; of fasting, penance, and mortification, varied occasionally by a little active immorality—for there are people who credit the abominable lies of "Maria Monk" and the "Baron de Camin." On the Continent, I have seen Nunneries which outwardly might come up to the popular idea, but the high walls, and many locks were, I believe, principally designed to *keep out* intruders. At Abbotsford, however, all these ideas are upset. The Convent Proper is merely a spacious one-storied wooden cottage, with a broad verandah running around two sides. All the rooms are furnished with French windows, which are used as entrances, and through one of these I am shown into the Convent reception room. I send a card inscribed "The Vagabond" to the Reverend Mother, and await her coming. The room is neatly furnished, with nothing, except the extreme neatness and primness and the religious pictures, to distinguish it from an ordinary citizen's. The chromos on the walls are good, but the oil paintings are not of the highest order of art. I afterwards hear that they are painted by one of the sisters, and I

give her every credit for her endeavours. Looking out of the window beyond the well-kept gravel path, I see that the garden slopes gently down to the river, the wooded heights of Studley Park on the other side confining the view, and giving an air of seclusion to the place. But I have not long to wait. The door opens, and two ladies enter, attired, like the Portress, in long robes of white serge, and hoods and bandages of the same material. There is nothing in dress to distinguish the Superioress from an ordinary sister. Falling from the throat they all wear a broad white serge band, underneath which they can incessantly tell their beads without ostentatious display. They all have hung round the neck a chased silver locket, heart-shaped, and bearing the monogram V.J.M., which I afterwards find means "*Vive J'esu et Marie !*" This is the password of the Order, it having been founded in France. From the waist beads and an ivory cross are hung. Emphatically an ugly dress, one to disguise all beauties of youth, feature, or form. The age of each individual wearer is to be guessed at. The first lady bows to me, "Miss Curtain—the Reverend Mother I mean?" query I. "Yes. And you? I do not know your name, but this is quite sufficient." Bowing to the other and younger lady, I draw up my chair and we sit down. Some people may imagine I would be embarrassed at finding myself in such society. I acknowledge that I am not used to talk to nuns, and I do not know what gossip is acceptable in a Convent. But we soon get along very well together. I explain that I want to see the institution, and that, although a depraved heretic, I have an interest in social reforms. "Yes," says the Reverend Mother, smiling gravely upon me, "we know you very well; you are very fond of writing in *The Argus*." I admit the fact, and the lady, who speaks with a charming

accent, the faintest *souçon* of Irish brogue with a French veneer, expresses the pleasure they would feel in showing me everything. "We are always glad to see visitors, and let them judge for themselves," said she. After a little more ordinary conversation we start out and proceed along the path to some dismal bluestone buildings, separated from the Convent by a low, broken-down wooden paling. These are the wards of the Magdalen Asylum.

We first enter a yard where a shed is being erected, to be used as a temporary refectory, the present one not being half large enough for the requirements of the establishment. Next there is a room devoted to mangling and folding washed clothes, the principal industry here being laundry work. From this we proceed to the ironing-room, a particularly hot place on a summer's day, where I see men's shirts and mysterious female garments shining with a white brilliancy equal to the work turned out by the Chinamen from the Contra Costa laundry at San Francisco. The linen here, however, is not marked by the laundresses as in California, the only drawback there being that your name is printed on your shirts in Chinese characters, and the Heathen may take all sorts of liberties with your patronymic. From the ironing-room we pass into the washing-room, where the hot water is supplied from a large boiler. In all these rooms I see "penitent fallen women" working under the eyes and superintendence of a few nuns. Their dress is of the plainest, any attempt at personal adornment being apparently discouraged. They are of all ages, but the majority are old women. On some there is a settled look of despair and discontent; they have not yet found peace. Others, and especially the younger ones, look cheerful, happy, and contented with their lot. Except



during the hour of silence, they sing at their work, French *chansons* and Welsh odes being heard; for many nationalities are gathered here, and many creeds, for it is the boast of the good nuns that they open their gates freely to females of all denominations. The Reverend Mother tells me they will not attempt to influence the religious faith of any penitent, they will not press them to go to Chapel, or ask them to read religious works. If they did proselytize, I, for one, should hold them blameless. The fallen woman, rescued and reformed by Catholic hands, is likely, logically, to embrace that faith. Amongst these women there are to be seen many with a collar round their necks embroidered with the motto "*Marie est ma mère.*" These are called "Children of Mary," and are those who have specially distinguished themselves by their good conduct, and have devoted themselves to a life of repentance. A higher stage is when they become, with the aid of Holy Church, consecrated penitents, being a sort of lay sisterhood. These wear a black dress and stiff white cap, and have, I presume, some slight authority over new comers.

We inspect a hot-air drying-room, to be used in wet weather; but now the clothes are all hung out in the yard. There we see the little gasometer and retort which supplies the institution with gas. This is entirely managed by one of the "Children of Mary," and I am told that the cost is very trifling. Then upstairs we march through rows of dormitories, spotlessly clean, but very crowded. In a room attached to each ward one or two sisters sleep. Night and day the penitents are watched and cared for. Everywhere there are little altars, and figures of the Blessed Virgin, to whom these fallen ones pray for grace to resist temptation. Down stairs again, we pass into the work-rooms, where all the clothes, including the shoes, used by every

one in the institution, from the Reverend Mother to the latest penitent, are made. Sisters are in charge of the different departments, and when we enter the workers all rise with respect. I question Miss Curtain as to the inmates. There are at present 136 in the Asylum, some of whom have been there for many years. Last year the total number received was 244. Of these 48 were placed in service or restored to their friends; others were discharged for misconduct, or sent to the hospital, and 5 died. The receipts from all sources, including the Parliamentary grant of £950, and £2,045 realized by the penitents' labour, were £4,807. The expenditure was £5,400, or not £25 *per capita*. Over £860 was expended in building, repairs, fittings, and furniture. New buildings are, in fact, sadly needed for the health and comfort of the inmates. The only thing requisite to obtain admission is an acknowledgment of penitence, and an agreement to abide by the rules of the institution. Any poor woman knocking at the door can, if there is room, be admitted on these terms. Some come here in this manner, others are sent by the worthy Catholic ladies who visit the hospitals. Many of the old women here cannot properly be said to now come under the scope of this institution. They are ruined, it may be by indulgence in strong drink, and are only fit for some such place as the Benevolent Asylum. But, as the Reverend Mother says, "We cannot turn them into the streets to starve." Work and prayer are the means used to bring fallen ones to repentance. They work hard, which keeps down the devil, and pray some, which arouses softer feelings in their hearts. But they are fed well, and have their hours of ease and relaxation, when they can take exercise in the paddock, or read the good books provided for them. It is a discipline,

and a hard one perchance—one likely to test the true repentance of any penitent. Every inmate has to remain in the institution for a certain length of time, and fully satisfy the nuns of her reform before she is recommended for a situation. But this discipline is softened by the kind womanly sympathy of the nuns, who look on the fallen ones—not as lost souls, but as strayed sheep, whom it is their duty and pleasure to gather to the fold of the Good Shepherd, for here and hereafter.

Leaving the Asylum, which is kept by strict moral boundaries from the other parts of the Convent, we visit the Church dedicated to the "Immaculate Conception." This is divided into four parts. In the central nave the nuns worship. On one side, partitioned off by a wooden screen, the inmates of the Magdalen Asylum sit. Opposite, also divided from the space allotted to the nuns, the general public are admitted. Above this there is a gallery for children. It is a pretty little church; nothing, however, very striking about it. A nun is praying kneeling on the bare stone, and in the vestry we find another sister. Here, framed, is a diploma or certificate from the *Collegio Romano della Propaganda Fede*, the head quarters of the Catholic Missions, where men are taught all living tongues, and from whence they sally forth and spread over the face of the earth, preaching a kingdom not of this world, and carrying the cross of Christ where the soldiers of the flesh dare not penetrate. I admit this fact, although, as a scoffer, I say, *cui bono?* One thing, however, I know—the followers of S. Francis Xavier and Ignatius Loyola have not the nice times of it which fall to the lot of many of my friends of the numerous Evangelical London Foreign Missions. From the Church we go into the School-room. There are now 238 Catholic children in the institution, chiefly sent from the State

Industrial and Reformatory Schools, and some few by their parents. The Government pays 5s. a week for each child, but to obtain this the nuns must show that they expend 7s. 6d. The difference is made up by donations from the charitable. The children are of all ages, from infancy to adolescence. The Industrial and Reformatory children are separated, and all strictly kept from communication with the "penitents" of the Magdalen Asylum. The elder girls are in working-rooms, some doing needlework, others assisting in the kitchen and about household work. They are well trained by the sisters, and, when of sufficient age, readily find employment as domestic servants. In the School-room we find all the younger children assembled. Some are sewing, the very little ones only nurse dolls. As we enter they are singing what at first I thought was a hymn, but it turns out to be a nursery rhyme. The little ones highly enjoy the fun, and the Reverend Mother and the sister accompanying her smile their acknowledgments to the bobs and looks of recognition given them. Sister —— is evidently particularly fond of children, and it is very evident that the rule here is one of love. Upstairs we visit the dormitories; from these the children can obtain admission into the Church gallery. Downstairs we see the children's refectory and the kitchen, in which jam-making, on an extensive scale, is going on, which promises hopefully for the future material wants of the little ones. Then we pass into the bakery and store. I taste the bread, which is very good, and see the mystic wafer in its initial state. Nuns are working in every place, and cleanliness and order are visible everywhere.

The School buildings are close to the sisters' quarters. As we walk around the verandah the Reverend Mother shows me the dwelling-rooms of the nuns. The "community-room" is

simply a nice dining-room. It contains an old Broadwood's piano, and a photograph of the parent Convent *Du Bon Pasteur*, at Angers, in France. There the late and present Reverend Mother were reared, and came out to Australia to establish the existing institution. The Order especially devotes itself to the care and education of children. It has branches in every part of the world—in the Fifth Avenue, New York, close to the new St. Patrick's Cathedral, there is a very large establishment belonging to this Order. It is what is commonly known as an "enclosed Order," the nuns, from the time of their profession, never leaving the Convent grounds, unless by a dispensation to found new Branches. In a corner of the grounds I am shown a little cemetery, where seven sisters lie buried—all those who have died since this place was founded, in 1863. In death, as well as in life, they must remain here. Their only bonds are moral ones, for anyone wanting to leave could walk out of the front gate at any hour of the day. The whole question of conventual seclusion has been argued so often that I doubt if I can say anything new on the subject. Of course, I object to it. I object to anyone making or incurring solemn and binding obligations in their youth which, in after years, they might think fit to break. Such a course infringes that personal freedom, which, so long as it does not interfere with anyone else, I hold is the right of every one. I would not object to any ladies, and especially in the old world, where there is such a disproportion in the sexes, shutting themselves up and praying or working: it is the sacrifice of youth which I dislike. *Quien sabe?* Perhaps many of them, both for here and hereafter, are doing better work than if out in the world following the devices of their vain sisters. I take the convent of Abbotsford as it

is, and I am bound to say that all the sisters I met seemed cheerful, happy, and contented. There are at present thirty-seven nuns in the institution, and they really have a vast amount of work to do. "We want a few more sisters," said the Reverend Mother. "We do not object to the work, but as nuns we want time to pray, and we have not sufficient now." I think myself that these good ladies are praying best by their works. I have an idea that at the finish deeds will count for more than prayers. After leaving the community-room we inspect the surgery, and then visit the garden. Out of this there is the farm-yard, where we find, in the stalls, a dozen patient kine, being milked by a sister, whose costume looks rather incongruous, who has charge of this department. A half-caste girl, from the Reformatory, is sweeping up the place. In the styes we see some fine black Berkshire pigs; and a brown retriever, which welcomes us, makes it appear more home-like. Near here are the cottages of the gardeners, who live on the premises. There are four male servants, three gardeners, and the man who drives the laundry-van. These have all been in the Convent service for some years.

The Reverend Mother and Sister — kindly walk with me around the pleasant gardens, which are chiefly devoted to the culture of useful vegetables. A quantity of lucerne and maize is also grown for the cattle. Here there are some fine mulberry trees, the luscious fruit of which is being picked by a number of the children, who, I have no doubt, relish the employment. This is for jam-making purposes. Nuns have always been renowned as makers of excellent preserves and simples; indeed, there is a cunning medicine, originally compounded by them, called Chartreuse, which has a world-wide

reputation. So I have no doubt capital jam is made at Abbotsford. In the garden we come upon a little grove of willows, circling an open space where formerly a fountain played. Here, however, now rises the gentle image of the Mother of Heaven. In the garden the useful has not been sacrificed to the ornamental, but there are some fine geranium and rose bushes, and I am honoured by having a bouquet for my buttonhole, picked for me by Sister — under the Reverend Mother's instructions. These ladies are really so good and kind to me that I am afraid they will have to do some penance for it hereafter. In my day I have tasted all the sweets of success and popularity. In the old world and the new I have been feasted and *fêted*, but I consider the greatest compliment ever paid me was by the Reverend Mother, when she said, "We always look at *The Argus* on a Saturday to see your writings, and we think you have done a great deal of good." This was heaping coals of fire on my head with a vengeance! I am glad that my whole impressions of Abbotsford are favourable, so that I am not forced to hurt their feelings. Refreshed by kindly hospitality, displayed in the form of cake and wine, I hold pleasant converse with these ladies for some time, they displaying a not unfeminine interest in the affairs of the outside world. At parting, I amuse the Reverend Mother by asking if they are allowed to shake hands with me; and I leave thoroughly pleased with my long visit, chastened by converse with two pure ladies, and satisfied that really good work is being done by the nuns of the Good Shepherd. They are reclaiming the lowest and worst kind of outcasts, the old miserable "man-eaters" of society. As regards other unfortunates, gradually sinking through the depths, charity displayed in time may prevent their falling so low as to make it necessary

for them to lose their last atom of self-respect by associating with the fallen ones at Abbotsford. If you can reclaim the new Magdalen without publicly proclaiming her shame, so much the better ; but where that is not possible, this Asylum steps in, and the work being done there deserves and requires the sympathy and support of all classes and all creeds in Victoria.

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